In our book "The New Global Order" we discussed the evolution of the order through Geopolitical and Geo-economic transitions leading to the Cartelisation of Natural Resources. There are several tools employed for this such as Narco-Terror, Petrodollar, Climate Change, Water Wars, Surveillance State, Communism and other ideological doctrines, Economic Hit Men, the Military-Industrial Complex etc. It has and always will be about trade and control.

We are now in the Fourth Industrial Revolution. This will create great global churn as old powers are forced to make way for the new. Data is replacing Oil and Gas as the new gold and thus everything related to it will be up for grabs. The world will see a thirst for mineral resources as power hungry corporations, intelligence agencies and countries jostle each other for supremacy.

The Korean Peninsula is significant here. Nature has blessed it with abundant mineral resources to become a player of global significance but this blessing much like Afghanistan has become a curse. It has been reduced to a pawn in the fight by those who covet its bounty. The once culturally rich Peninsula is divided into two nation states of contrasting ideologies influenced by different powers and their proxies that would never want it to rediscover its united grandeur independently. Will the Korean Peninsula get a chance to reclaim its rightful place at the high table or is it forever doomed to remain "A Pawn on the Geopolitical Chessboard."

ASIAN WARRIOR
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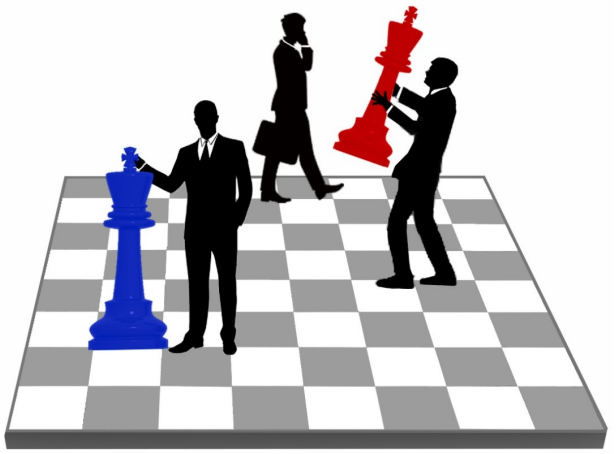
Korean Peninsula A Pawn On The Geopolitical Chessboard

Foreword by Nitin A. Gokhale

Korean Peninsula

A Pawn On The Geopolitical Chessboard



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NAVEEN TOMAR NAVROOP SINGH HIMJA PAREKH

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ALSO BY ASIAN WARRIOR

THE NEW GLOBAL ORDER (2016)

KOREAN PENINSULA

A Pawn On The Geopolitical Chessboard

"When goods do not cross borders, soldiers will".

– Frederic Bastiat

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www.asianwarrior.com
mail@asianwarrior.com

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Foreword

We live in interesting times.

Globalization propelled by rapidly evolving technology has taken giant strides. Exchange of goods and services across the globe and people to people ties are at an all-time high. The new inter-connected world should therefore have been a more peaceful and harmonious place to live in.

However, the world is now confronted with the rise of an increasing number of nationalist authoritarian leaders who have one leg in the future and one in history. The contradictions are galore; on one side they are embracing new technology and greater trade; on the other they are embarking on imperial quests to right historical wrongs—real and perceived resulting in a greater number of prolonged regional conflicts. Well-known and well-tested methods of conflict resolution are proving to be inadequate in the face of new, aggressive leadership in some nations.

Of the many current regional conflicts, the Korean Peninsula presents a clear and present danger to global peace and security. The reasons are many. It is perhaps the only conflict theatre apart from Afghanistan where three major powers, the United States, Russia and China are directly involved. The Korean peninsula shares borders with Russia and China. It also hosts a prominent US military base in the south with proximity to Japan; and a rogue nuclear nation in the north that is known as China's conjoined

twin under the dictatorship of Kim Jong-un who is not averse to the first use of nuclear weapons to achieve his goals!

While the world is well acquainted with South Korea due to its technological prowess, the isolated North remains an enigma. North Korea and its leader Kim Jong-un have commanded a fair share of media coverage in recent times due to brinkmanship on the nuclear issue. Yet, many details remain unknown.

Hence, when Naveen Tomar sent me the manuscript of a book on the Korean Peninsula that he and his team of Navroop Singh and Himja Parekh had written, I was curious and pleasantly surprised. I have had a chance to read their first book The New Global Order. Their analytical capabilities, understanding and unbiased judgement was well reflected in that book. So when the manuscript for this book came to me, I knew that they would present a fresh perspective about the Korean tangle.

The book is built on the premise that most wars have been about trade and the thirst for resources. The book starts with talking of the doctrine of Neo-Confucianism that existed in undivided Korea. It is fascinating to learn about this doctrine that became the state ideology of the Koreas in the 13th century. It was this doctrine that determined the Korean Peninsula's foreign policy of remaining a Hermit Kingdom defying international trade which led to its downfall and eventual Japanese occupation. Interestingly, even today, Chinese society is based on Confucian values of authority and obedience which have given the Communist Party a stronghold over the country while North Korea under "Juche" has manipulated the same ideology to exercise complete control.

The book also dwells on the power play that Japan, the United States, France, Russia and China engaged in, leading to the division

of the Korean peninsula in mid-20th century. Redrawing borders has never brought peace as history has repeatedly shown us and the division of the peninsula was no different. The antagonism between the North and the South and their proxies has resulted in one of the longest running conflicts of the 20th century that has spilled over to the 21st century and there seems to be no respite.

The authors have explained complex geopolitical and geo-economic atrocities of the peninsula pre and post division in a simple yet engaging manner taking the reader on a whirlwind journey. The Changing Dynamics section sums up today's complex environment well and is crucial to any kind of conflict resolution on the peninsula from military to diplomatic. It is followed by the hypothesis where the authors talk of the different scenarios that could emerge on the peninsula.

I commend Asian Warrior for their ability to think differently and handle a subject that is relatively untouched with a remarkable ease of understanding.

Nitin A. Gokhale
New Delhi
March 2018

About Asian Warrior

Asian Warrior was born in 2012 with a team of like-minded young people working towards the common goal of understanding the dynamic global patterns. Consisting of individuals from various streams of life, it endeavours to understand the absolute truth about reality to help make the world a better place. Asian Warrior's primary focus is geopolitics to discover social, economic and political patterns related to foreign policy and national security along with the study of their impact and significance on humanity in the times to come.

Globalization and unprecedented connectivity have ironically brought about an increase in issues that plague society and threaten global peace making it difficult to reach a universal consensus on important issues. This has made it necessary to examine conflicts through the lens of history entwined with social, political, cultural and other factors from a fresh perspective. Asian Warrior seeks to understand countries, cultures and people of influence in a non-biased way and objectively offer solutions to enable cooperation.

Coming from a wise and ancient civilization which believes in Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam meaning the world is one family; Asian Warrior respects and is sensitive to the cultural differences between geographies to bring people to a common platform where dialogues and solutions of betterment to aid companies and governments can be facilitated. After all, society is not a group of individuals, rather a sum of interrelations.

Asian Warrior prides itself on its ability to understand, forecast trends and predict global behavioural patterns due to its 360-degree approach. It also seeks to educate the public, train society, offer ideas to further its cause in a non-partisan way and welcomes collaborations and partnerships from all corners of the globe.

Asian Warrior's first book, The New Global Order provided a multidisciplinary angle on the world we live in, to find solutions for a peaceful way forward. The book explained how geography has shaped the world in the past, continues to do so today and will in the future as well without being biased towards the national interest of any particular country. After all, kings and kingdoms come and go, empires are created and ground to dust, democracies imposed and communist movements created, but the geography remains the same!

The world has seen extreme conflicts through World Wars 1 and 2 and Asian Warrior believes that it is up to us to ensure that our future generations are spared this ordeal more so at a time when the world is already overburdened with many pressing issues and looks forward to your continued trust and support.

Authors

Naveen Tomar

Naveen Tomar, the founder of Asian Warrior, is associated with the Oil and Gas industry. He hails from a family with strong agricultural ties. Naveen is very passionate about working towards the advancement and inclusion of a global society. He has been very active in the mentoring of youth from his academic days. His people skills and travels across diverse cultures and geographies make him a force to be reckoned with in the field of geopolitics. He considers Chanakya as his role model. Apart from this, he enjoys chess, the pursuit of speed and meditation.

Follow him on Twitter **@TheTomar**

Navroop Singh

Navroop Singh, a third-generation Intellectual Property Attorney, is a practising advocate before the Delhi High Court and the Supreme Court of India. He is the grandson of the illustrious Late Anoop Singh, who pioneered the IPR Laws from the time of Pre-Independence India. Navroop takes great pride in carrying forward his family legacy. He has also been responsible for recent historical judicial precedents like the use of God names like "Lord Krishna" as part of Trademarks and Intellectual Property. He is an avid reader with a keen interest in international affairs and geopolitics.

Follow him on Twitter **@s_navroop**

Himja Parekh

Himja Parekh is associated with social service. She is carrying forward her family's philanthropic legacy of the last four generations. She is an alumnus of the Rotary International's Professional Exchange Program where she was one of the youngest to be selected. She has also been associated with the diamond and jewellery industry. Her varied travels have given her the opportunity to indulge in her love of the study of cultures. She is an eternal student of global finance, geopolitics, and history. Apart from this, she loves cooking and enjoys classical music.

Follow her on Twitter **@HimjaParekh**

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Introduction

In the times we live in, few countries are as mysterious as North Korea. Most of us are reasonably aware about its better half South Korea and while the internet has made most countries accessible our awareness of North Korea remains negligible. Aptly called the Hermit Kingdom, the television documentary which showed a country where the citizens think of the ruling Kim family as their Supreme Leader whose benevolence makes everything possible was absolutely riveting. While the western media constantly reminds us of the severe food, economic and humanitarian crisis in North Korea, it impossibly manages to carry out nuclear and missile tests and challenge the conventional world order!

The Korean Peninsula is full of contradictions. The North has a powerful army but no money to feed its people while the South is a global technological leader counted among the most advanced and affluent countries in the world. And yet, not too long back they were both a single nation with a rich culture and heritage. Today, North Korea is communist with a cult leadership while South Korea leads the world in evangelical Christianity. How did this happen and how did things get so out of control?

North Korea is also firmly entrenched in the Axis of Evil countries that threaten humanity and world peace. It shares borders with two powerful countries, Russia and China while the

Republic of Korea, its southern half is heavily influenced by the United States. North Korea has also been heavily sanctioned since over a decade. Despite this, it is admirably daring to challenge the United States and China to carve out its own path and identity.

While the world has seen many leaders suffering from megalomania, is the Kim family merely another victim of the disease or is it attempting to correct the historical wrongs befallen on the Korean Peninsula which have made it a pawn on the geopolitical chessboard?

The Korean crisis is once again back on the boil with a barrage of North Korean missile tests and consequent reactions from US President Donald Trump who has vowed to "rain fire and fury" on North Korea if it threatens the United States or its allies in the region. Tensions escalated after President Trump's pressure on North Korea to give up its nuclear and missile testing capabilities of reaching the US mainland failed. Kim Jong-un has not been charitable towards the US either with mindless rhetoric from mocking the US President to threatening to strike Guam, a US territory and one of its largest naval bases in the Pacific region.

While the world precariously looks on at a prospective conflict in the region which could involve great powers and nuclear weapons the genesis of the Korean crisis is at least a century old. This begs a question about the timing. Why now? There was a big window of opportunity in the decade of the 90's when the USSR had fallen, the US was standing strong as the sole superpower and China was yet to begin its ascent to resolve the Korean crisis.

This did not come to pass and here we are in 2018, the era of the Asian Century when the crisis is back on the boil. Is this a simple coincidence or there's more than meets the eye?

Considering that Asia-Pacific is home to over 50 percent of the global population, two of the three largest global economies, the world's largest democracy, the world's largest Muslim country, the most populous nation, five declared nuclear nations, seven of the world's ten largest militaries, nine of the ten largest global ports and the world's busiest sea lanes for energy and commerce; any ramifications in the Korean Peninsula will have an impact on a majority of humankind.

These questions and facts compelled us to dig deeper to uncover the story and untangle the many mysteries of the Korean Peninsula that we have presented in the forthcoming chapters. We have subsequently also provided a hypothesis of the future alignments that are likely to take shape in Asia-Pacific. As our world becomes more connected it is necessary to understand societies and cultures whose exposure and perceptions are exclusive if we wish to maintain global peace. It is our collective responsibility to ensure that nothing untoward takes place as the fallout could be drastic to state the least. The Korean Peninsula: A Pawn on the Geopolitical Chessboard is our endeavour in this direction.

PART I

THE KOREAN TANGLE

"There is great pride in fighting for civilization
for it is the gift of our ancestors
and must be preserved at all costs".

CHAPTER 1

Neo-Confucianism and the Battle for Survival

Like all other bloody battles and invasions, this one is no different and centres on trade. To understand this let us go back in time to the 10th century. Korea's initial political and cultural assimilation and allegiance was tribal and clannish and did not identify with the concept of a nation state. The Korean Peninsula comprised of the 3 kingdoms of Silla (57 BC - 935 AD), Baekje (18 BC - 660 AD) and Goguryeo (37 BC - 668 AD) and occupied present day North and South Korea, and most of Manchuria, (part of present day Russia and China) during its Three Kingdoms Period and Later Three Kingdoms Period.[1] Goguryeo was the largest of the three kingdoms famous for its mighty castles and warrior kings with its capital at Pyongyang and remains a source of Korean pride to this day.

Buddhism and Confucianism were both introduced in Korea at the same time in Goguryeo (also called Koguryo) during King Sosurim's reign from 371 to 384 AD showcasing the Korean scholars' remarkable ability to explore the classic Chinese characters. Buddhism served as the ideological backing for the

new centralized bureaucracy while Confucianism began to be taught to maintain the social order.

In the Unified Silla Dynasty, (668-935 AD) the Three Kingdoms of Silla, Baekje and Goguryeo came under Silla in the southern part of the peninsula. When Goguryeo fell to Silla; Dae Jo-yeong, a former Goguryeo general of Mohe ethnicity united the Mohe and Goguryeo people and established Balhae as the successor state to Goguryeo. The Mohe were a Tungusic people comprising of seven tribes who lived mainly in present day Northeast Asia. Balhae occupied parts of southern Manchuria, Primorsky Krai and the northern part of the Korean Peninsula. This arrangement is quite similar to the one that exists today and many historians have interestingly referred to this era of Korean history as "the period of the North-South states or Nambukguk sidae".[2] Silla weakened during the 9th century and lost control to the local lords and the peninsula entered a period of civil war and rebellion leading to the creation of Later Three Kingdoms (892-936 AD).

The Kingdom of Goryeo was established in 918 AD by Taejo Wang-geon and went on to birth the Goryeo (Koryo) Dynasty responsible for giving the modern name Korea and ruled from 936-1392 AD. Wang-geon was the descendent of a noble family from Gaeseong which was historically Goguryeo territory and considered Goryeo as the successor state of Goguryeo. Goryeo united Later Three Kingdoms and ruled the entire peninsula under an "Empire".

The Goryeo Dynasty strengthened Buddhism in the peninsula beyond religion. Buddhist temples became rich, the monks powerful creating a strong ecosystem with a growing

class divide between the urban rich and the rural poor. The Goryeo also provided an environment for the Buddhist clergy to compete with Confucian scholars for positions in the local and national government. The Confucian scholars held sway over policy framing but remained in the shadow of their Buddhist rivals. Hence, it was inevitable that the scholars would resent the growing influence of the Buddhist clergy in what they considered their domain.[3]

The Korean Peninsula faced its first existential crisis during this time. The Mongol invasions of Korea (1231-1273) were a series of 6 brutal campaigns to gain control and forced the Korean people to fight. They resulted in mindless cruel slaughtering and the complete devastation of the rural areas. In addition, the growing corruption of the Buddhist clergy, the brutal Goryeo dictatorship and the expanding class divide led to a defeat against the Mongols in 1267 (Yuan Dynasty led by Kublai Khan) making Korea a Mongol vassal state for 80 years.[4]

The Mongolization of the Korean court began encouraging marriages between the Korean royals and the Mongols. As Korea became a subordinate principality Mongolian wives and concubines started influencing Korea's foreign policy forcing the Goryeo court to flee to Ganghwa Island to evade further Mongol attacks.[5] Despite such adversity, Korea remained a unified nation pining for its culture and heritage.

All of the above brought tremendous suffering for the Korean people. During this time Ahn Hyang, the Goryeo Dynasty's leading Confucian scholar visited the Yuan Dynasty's capital city Khanbaliq (1289) which is today Beijing as part of the king's delegation and brought back a handwritten copy of renowned

Confucian scholar Zhu Xi's doctrine of Neo-Confucianism.[6] The teachings of individual ethics and virtuous governance gave him tremendous hope.

Along with him many scholars especially from the poor and middle classes disgusted by the excess of organized religion and the old nobility also drew inspiration. These Neo-Confucian scholar groups led the intellectual fight in overthrowing the Goryeo Dynasty that was losing its Korean characteristics and gaining more foreign influence with each passing day.[7]

By the 1350's the Yuan Dynasty started crumbling and the Goryeo began pushing the Mongol garrisons back.[8] By 1356 Korea was no longer a vassal state of the Yuan.[9] Fed up with constant strife and the ineffective royalty that had become subordinate to a foreign power the Korean people were ripe for change. The cycle had changed and the lower classes were now determining policy and it was time for the powerful upper corrupt classes to go.

The Goryeo Dynasty fell and with it the powerful landed aristocracy. The Neo-Confucian scholars denounced Buddhism calling it poison. Buddhism was restricted and Buddhists occasionally persecuted. This brought the last dynasty to rule the Korean Peninsula, the Joseon to power (1392-1910). The Joseon Dynasty shared close trade and diplomatic ties with China's Ming Dynasty (1368-1644) as both emerged from Mongol rule and officially adopted Neo-Confucianism as the state ideology.[10]

Neo-Confucianism

Neo-Confucianism identified the West with evil and Korea's ruling elite staunchly upheld this tradition. Fed up of being repeatedly invaded and plundered by foreign powers that were

undermining its culture, Neo-Confucianism seemed perfect for Korea at the time. As a result, Korea also became known as the Hermit Kingdom which refers to any country, organization or society that wilfully walls itself off either metaphorically or physically from the rest of the world. Korea earned this moniker in the 1882 book Corea: The Hermit Nation by William Eliott Griffis.[11]

Let us examine the doctrine of Neo-Confucianism briefly. Neo-Confucianism is based on the theory of principle (i) and material force (gi); the philosophical foundation upon which the entire thought system including the notion of universe and ontology rests. Neo-Confucian scholar Zhu Xi ranked second to Confucius in influence and philosophy has stated, "For everything that exists, there is a principle that makes it exist. This law applies to each and every existing thing. Nothing exists on its own. It is simply not allowed. This law is from heaven and there is nothing that humans can do about it". Based on this principle Neo-Confucians produced the idea of "unity between heaven and man" which meant that human nature, the moral order of society, and the order of nature have the same origin.[12]

Neo-Confucianism was a godsend for a war ravaged and oppressed lower class as well as the incoming ruler and dominated the Korean Peninsula influencing all aspects of its life. Neo-Confucianism contains both: a theory of justice that stresses the appropriate mutual relationships between social superiors and inferiors with a view to sustaining the social order and the theory that the "principle is one but its manifestations are many" (liyi fenshu) designed to ease conflicts between landowners and their tenant peasants.

It made land reclamation and wealth distribution easy providing a stable society for the Joseon Dynasty to rule and a rearrangement of medieval Korean society.[13] However, Neo-Confucianism had its limitations in rigidity as it defined the ever-changing real world with the fixed idea of a principle which meant that it would be unable to cope with any change related to foreign policy, administration, military capability or wealth enhancement.[14]

By 1418 under King Sejong's rule Neo-Confucianism was firmly established in the peninsula replete with foreign educated scholars, libraries etc. Arts and artists were patronised and educational institutions had a curriculum ranging from 13 to 15 major Neo-Confucian works. The adage of too much of a good thing can be harmful proved true here as well. The scholars not content with their advanced studies sought to create Neo-Confucianism schools with even more rigid thoughts as the primary belief system for adoption among scholars and administrators. Yi Hwang and Yi I were the two most prominent scholars who established the Southeastern; and the Seoul and Southwest schools of Neo-Confucianism respectively in the early fifteenth century.[15]

By the 17th century further splits began to take place as scholars advocated more practical learning and began questioning the metaphysical beliefs and practices of Neo-Confucianism inherited from Buddhism and Taoism. These debates failed to address the changing global realities and Korea's emerging socio-economic challenges with the dogmatic old guard unwilling to find middle ground with the reform-oriented scholars. The old guard was busy lamenting what it viewed as the loss of Korean

society and culture to alien influences by the abandonment of the Chinese classics and Confucian rites.[16]

Meanwhile the Peninsula grappled with western countries trying to force it, Japan and China to open their borders to western trade, technology and institutions which also brought the perils of missionaries and Christian beliefs.

Jeong Yak-yong (1762-1836), one of the greatest thinkers of the last era of the Joseon Dynasty rightly noted on Neo-Confucianism's tendency, "These days Neo-Confucianists make all kinds of theories about Neo-Confucianism in their own ways. Although all of these theories are nothing but something concocted in their own minds, they act as if they have been enlightened to the noble, subtle principle of heaven and earth, thereafter establishing schools fashioned after their own respective theories. They quarrel over their own theories and cannot determine what is really important until they die, then passing on their quarrels, with grudges piling up from generation to generation". This symptom holds true for intellectuals globally as they are so wrapped up in the discussions of the mind-heart, social sciences, humanities and human nature that they often ignore the real worldly problems and are unable to respond to them![17]

Ming: The Greater Universe

Let us also examine the rigidity of the scholars differently. As stated earlier, Korea's isolationism or seclusion formed the crux of its diplomatic and foreign policy. This stemmed from its belief that it was the centre of a little universe with China's Ming Dynasty as the greater universe. Since the Ming's diplomatic crux was isolation, Korea adopted it in toto rejecting all western

thoughts as evil (Chuksaron). Let us first understand why the Ming Dynasty adopted this belief.

In the early 14th century, the Ming Dynasty witnessed interesting palace politics. The main players were the Ming royals, the religious lobbies, commercial investors and Neo-Confucian scholars.[18] During this time, the Chinese navy was the largest in the world on an expansion spree into the South Seas and the Indian Ocean. The Ming emperor Yongle wanted to showcase his country's naval power which many scholars considered a sign of vanity. This clearly shows that the Ming was not an isolated society and had trade relations with the outside world. Its trade with Japan was also rising significantly. The Ming navy sailed as far as the east coast of Africa and even gained a foothold in Turkestan. These expeditions were not just diplomatic or for gaining tributes but were also about stimulating conventional trade beyond the token protectionism that is the norm of any kind of colonization/ tributaries.[19]

Thus, when Zheng He, an ambitious outsider and a Muslim (in the elite Neo-Confucian scholar establishment) was appointed to lead a sea faring task in 1403 it was a clear win for the commercial lobbies over the scholarly establishment. The religious lobbies also shared interests with the commercial lobbies as commercialism and the expensive exploration would force the state to invest outwards tightening the purse strings of the Neo-Confucian scholars.

Zheng He commanded 7 naval expeditions that took him to 37 countries over 28 years almost a century before the Portuguese reached India by sailing around Africa's southern tip. For the Ming, these "Treasure Fleet" ships resulted in tremendous

economic gain marking the re-emergence of the glorious Chinese empire. This re-aligned the palace politics empowering the newly rich merchant class. This worried the scholars as they feared a loss of power. The scholars even went to the extreme lengths of suppressing all mention of the successful naval expeditions in the official imperial record. The scholarly elite further urged the Chinese emperors to abandon these ships citing possible threat to their royal rule in the long term.

The Mongol raids at the time conveniently tilted the balance from the lobbies to the Neo-Confucian scholars. By the close of the 15th century imperial subjects were forbidden from either building oceangoing ships or leaving the country.[20] The official explanation was the threat of piracy but it is obvious that the scholarly elite preyed upon the insecurities of the emperor to secure false advantages for themselves to prevent the rise of any other class. This endeavour consolidated Neo-Confucianism as the Ming's state ideology. Finally by imperial decree, the great navy was decommissioned and the scholars had their way.[21]

The Ming Dynasty fell to the Manchu Qing Dynasty which invaded Korea in 1636 making it its tributary state till 1894 and formally severed Korea's ties with the Ming Dynasty.[22] Despite this, Korea's adherence to Neo-Confucianism remained unchanged. Due to its continued isolation the peninsula further lost out on the extraordinary accomplishments of China under the Qing as well as the discovery of Western science, technology and ideas. Perhaps if its scholars had amended their ways even during the Manchu era, the fate of the Korean Peninsula could have been very different today and the Japanese occupation averted.

The above shows how the Ming's scholarly and political elite destroyed a world class navy that would have made China a global leader centuries ago just to secure their positions and consequently scuttled free trade. As a result, the Ming became isolated; China's global influence diminished and the Industrial Revolution came to Europe first delaying China's growth.

Similarly, the failure to reform later forced the Korean Peninsula to sign a Friendship Treaty with the US as a defensive measure and eventually led to its Japanese occupation. Joseon's dogmatic old guard subsequently isolated itself in the rural areas of the Korean Peninsula and found common ground with the growing communist movement which later converted into the repressive dictatorship of North Korea. We will expand upon this further in the book.

History shows us many similar stories. The scholarly class that determines policy will do whatever it takes to maintain the status quo and remain relevant. It is another matter that in the battle for them to stay relevant the country that they preside over becomes irrelevant.

CHAPTER 2

The Empire of the Sun Strikes

After the Industrial Revolution in the 18th century, European nations were on the lookout for new markets and areas for the settlement of their poor migrants along with a desire to "civilize the barbarian nations". In our first book, The New Global Order we have discussed Cartelization of Natural Resources as the ultimate aim of control. This necessitates a geopolitical and geo-economic evolution but it is difficult to sign free trade treaties with a country that is a hermit kingdom or inward looking.

Hence, various measures need to be employed to gradually dilute the core essence and values of a culture and civilization to make the once impossible possible. The West used this strategy to colonize almost all of Africa and Central, South, and Southeast Asia. China lost half its territory. The prospect of losing its independence, culture and integrity to the West made Japan very anxious and it embarked upon an aggressive imperial quest as a counter.

During this time, Korea was ruled by Yi Ha-hung, (also known as Yi Ha-eung) a strict Neo-Confucianism adherent.[23] Ha-hung assumed power in 1863 and was one of the key political figures of the Joseon Dynasty. Symptomatic with the ideology,

he was very rigid and resistant to change. His foreign policy was very simple- no treaties, no trade, no Catholics, no West, and no Japan. Any foreigners entering Korea were killed or driven off and Catholic priests persecuted. The only country he excluded from his isolationist policy was China.

The Korean Peninsula was eyed as a potential economic colony by Germany, France, Great Britain, Russia and the United States who demanded that it open its ports for trade and used all possible diplomatic and economic preliminaries for this purpose but failed. For Korea, the opening of trade ports was anathema to its state ideology as this would expose its society to western trade, technologies and institutions and make Korean nationalism and culture vulnerable to the threat of Catholic and Protestant missionary schools which propagated Christian religious beliefs.

This meant that Korea could not enjoy the benefits of the Industrial Revolution as limited exposure prevented new developments from entering the highly structured and hierarchical Korean society. Korean society consisted of a minority scholar class and the royalty whose wealth came from the taxes and labour of the lower classes and slaves. Thus even well-meaning reforms could threaten or collapse the existing class structure.

Though Christianity was introduced in Korea by the Neo-Confucian scholars who viewed it as an academic interest; common people flocked to it as it preached a religion that was equal for all in complete contradiction to Neo-Confucianism. These followers called themselves "Friends of the Teaching of God of Heaven". Ha-hung found this subversive to his rule and the state carried out a systemic suppression in which around 10,000 adherents were killed.[24]

Yi Ha-hung was forced into retirement in 1873 by Queen Min (the first official wife of King Gojong, the last King of Korea) who advocated stronger ties between Russia and Korea. This was naturally considered a threat by Japan and resulted in political instability in Korea. Japan took advantage of this and employed gunboat diplomacy forcing Korea to sign the unequal Treaty of Ganghwa Island in 1876.[25] This treaty ended Korea's status as a tributary of the Qing Dynasty and opened three of its ports: Busan, Incheon and Wonsan to Japan. It also granted Japan the rights of extraterritoriality making Korea vulnerable to the influence of western or imperialist powers. This treaty was also responsible for Korea's annexation to Japan later where it became a Japanese protectorate for 35 years till World War 2.

There are many versions of this story. Some state that Japan deliberately attacked a poorly armed Korea forcing it to retaliate with the intent of forcing trade as all previous negotiations had failed. Another version states that the Japanese naval vessel Un-yo that landed illegally in Korean waters on September 20, 1875 requesting water and provisions could not have run out so close to home in such a strategic location without reason. Japan was aware that Korea usually shot any foreign vessels illegally entering its waters. French and American vessels were proof of the same. However, considering the geopolitical situation at the time and increasing Russian aggression; Japan desperately needed Korea as its western front in fending off attacks from the West along with Korean soldiers for its army.

Even today, Japan deliberately omits its actions in the contentious Dokdo-Takeshima Islands which were in many ways signs of its clear intent much before it formally annexed the Korean Peninsula. While the Japanese actions stemmed

from saving their empire from American and European gunboat diplomacy and unequal treaties, Japan's counter defence measures were even worse.

The Treaty of Ganghwa that Japan forced on Korea was even more unequal than those forced by the western powers on Japan earlier. While Japan was allowed to purchase goods with its currency at face value by the West, Korea was forced to agree to a complete tariff exemption on Japanese imports with Japan agreeing to not levy duties on goods coming from or going to Korea. As we can see, currency manipulation is not really a new concept, China is the master of this game today but historically all strong trading countries have found ways to abuse the concept of "free and fair trade" creating deep rooted hostilities that hold true even today.

Russo-Japanese War: 1904-05

By the beginning of the 20th century, Czarist Russia and Imperial Japan were both eyeing the control of Korea and Manchuria. Multiple overtures were made by the Americans, British etc. and while they did not meet with success the merchant ships that brought Korea in contact with the West appeared more powerful and advanced than those of Japan or China. For the West, the contact with Korean culture and previous failed overtures necessitated a change in the engagement strategy from offence to moderation and diplomacy. This change coupled with the forced signing of the Ganghwa Treaty made Korea agreeable to greater engagement with the West.

On May 22, 1882 the United States and Korea signed a peace treaty, Treaty of Friendship.[26] This treaty stated among other things

that both countries in the case of being violated by other nations would use their good offices to aid each other to bring about an amicable settlement. This treaty did not oblige the US to protect Korea's political independence and therein lays the conflict. For the United States, this treaty was purely economic whereas for Korea it was political.

Meanwhile in 1894, the first Sino-Japanese War broke out where Japan defeated China and quickly pushed into Manchuria. Japan killed thousands of Chinese civilian citizens in what came to be known as the Port Arthur Massacre and by 1895 the Japanese army had fortified the command posts with sea approaches to Beijing. Faced with certain defeat China's Qing Dynasty signed the Treaty of Shimonoseki on April 17, 1895 which agreed to Korea's complete independence and ceded its Liaodong Peninsula in the southern Fengtian Province (Liaoning today), Manchuria, Taiwan and the Pescadores Islands to Japan in perpetuity. Japan subsequently annexed these by 1900 along with Hokkaido, the Kuril, Marcus Island, Bonin Islands and the Miyako-Yaeyama.

To prevent Japan from gaining in Manchuria further Russia, France and Germany proceeded to carve out territory among them in a triple intervention. Russia moved to immediately occupy the entire Liaodong Peninsula, Germany acquired Qingdao in the Shandong Province and Great Britain occupied Weihaiwei. This Russian aggression laid the grounds for the Russo-Japanese War that was to follow and forced Japan to rethink its military strategy in regards to the Korean Peninsula whose occupation it considered essential to fortify its defence. Japan subsequently started using soft power and other economic tools to consolidate its hold on the Korean Peninsula.

Fully aware of the Russo-Japanese tug of war, the Korean Emperor Gojong on November 23, 1903 (three months before the Russo-Japanese War broke out in February 1904) pledged "Should a war between Russia and Japan break out in the future, our country will declare our neutrality". On January 16, 1904 he sent a letter proclaiming Korea's neutrality to all the world powers.[27] As Japan was regulating Korea's telegraphic services special precautions were taken to ensure that the letter would safely reach all countries.

The Russo-Japanese War broke out in the first week of February, 1904 and by the end of the month Japan forced Korea to sign the Japan-Korea Protocol of 1904[28] which allowed it to occupy Korea's strategic areas if it was endangered by external aggression. This virtually granted Japan access for placing its troops on the peninsula effectively making inroads into Korean sovereignty. This treaty was a preventive measure for Japan post the triple intervention episode but there was much more in the background that was still to come out.

The Russo-Japanese War was funded by the famous American banker Jacob Schiff of Kuhn Loeb & Co[29] by way of Japanese War Bonds against Czarist Russia. For Schiff, the immense dislike towards Czarist Russia's brutal anti-Semitism was personal leading him to lobby with several US presidents to abrogate the 1832 American-Russian trade treaty citing Russia's discriminatory immigration practices. Schiff also lobbied with British and American bankers to back Imperial Japan to weaken the Russian empire. In 1904 he met with the Bank of Japan's deputy governor Takahashi Korekiyo and extended loans worth $200 million through his firm covering almost half the cost of Japan's war campaign. The loan attracted global attention and the War Bonds

found takers in American and European markets. Resultantly, Japan was able to purchase large munitions and win the war against Czarist Russia.

Jacob Schiff gained handsomely in the war. In addition, he was also recognized diplomatically. Schiff was granted a private audience with UK's King Edward VII in 1904 while Japan awarded him with The Order of the Sacred Treasure in 1905 and the Order of the Rising Sun, Gold and Silver Star in 1907 from the Japanese Emperor personally in the Imperial Palace. He was the first foreigner to receive such an honour. The Russo-Japanese War ended with the Japanese occupation of South Manchuria, the Korean Peninsula and the southern half of Sakhalin Island.[30] The Treaty of Portsmouth formally ended the Russo-Japanese War of 1904–05. The negotiations took place in August in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, and were brokered in part by US President Theodore Roosevelt.

Taft-Katsura Memorandum

On July 29, 1905 Japan's Count Katsura met with the United States Secretary of War (later President) William Howard Taft to resolve the grievances between the two countries in context of their respective roles in East Asia especially regarding the status of The Philippines and Korea post the Russo-Japanese War. The discussion called the Taft-Katsura Memorandum effectively took away Korea's independence.

How? Japan played a smart game here and stated that it had no interest in The Philippines which the United States had occupied since the 1898 Spanish-American War and also agreed to the continued American presence in Hawaii. In short, the

United States endorsed the Japanese occupation of Korea for its continued occupation in The Philippines and Hawaii. This was later confirmed by President Roosevelt in his telegram[31] dated July 31st, 1905.

King Gojong was desperate and sent Homer B Hulbert,[32] an American citizen who served as Korea's special diplomatic representative to the United States to meet with President Roosevelt requesting help vide the 1882 Friendship Treaty but Roosevelt and Secretary of State Elihu Root turned Korea's pleas away.

The Korean Plea and Japanese Occupation

The Japan–Korea Treaty of 1905 also known as the Eulsa Treaty, Eulsa Unwilling Treaty or Japan–Korea Protectorate Treaty[33] was signed on November 17, 1905 declaring Korea to be a protectorate under Japanese rule. King Gojong sent 17 personal letters bearing the imperial seal against this illegal signing to the rulers of UK, France, Russia, Austria-Hungary, Belgium, Italy, China and Germany. He stated that he was not a signatory to the treaty as Japanese Field Marshal Hasegawa Yoshimichi persuaded him to sign the treaty but he did not agree subsequent to which Japan threatened the Korean cabinet with bodily harm forcing them to sign the treaty under duress.

King Gojong also sent three secret emissaries to the Second Hague Peace Convention to declare Japan's manoeuvres to annex Korea illegal and asserted his rights as a monarch to rule Korea independently. These emissaries however, did not gain entry in the convention hall as Japan had assumed responsibility for Korea's international representation per the 1905 Treaty.

President Theodore Roosevelt won the Nobel Peace Prize for negotiating peace in the Russo-Japanese War and sealed the fate of the Korean Peninsula. The 1882 Friendship Treaty between the US and Korea was terminated and the American legation in Seoul was shut down. This has been long considered a betrayal of the American promise of friendship by the Korean people.

Many years later, US Secretary of State Elihu Root stated that a lot of people were angry at America for not preventing Japan's Korean occupation but there was nothing America could have done short of fighting Japan which the US Congress would not allow. For President Roosevelt this was pure realpolitik as he felt that Japan's occupation of Korea would keep Russia in check as Korea would be to Russia what Cuba was to the United States. This would result in greater peace in the Far East as long as "China was not sliced as that would be bad for all". He was also of the opinion that Japanese occupation would "lift the backward Koreans into modernity", a clear case of the white man taking on the burden of the world complex.[34]

For Czarist Russia which emerged on the losing side of the war; the setbacks were too much to handle and it was overthrown in the Bolshevik Revolution which established a communist dictatorship under Lenin and Stalin. The American double games[35] in the Far East have also been vividly captured in the book "The China Mirage: The Hidden History of American Disaster in Asia" by James Bradley.[36] We have also expounded in our book "The New Global Order" about how the communists in the US administration and Wall Street bankers similarly abetted the rise of Mao's revolutionaries in establishing People's Republic of China.[37]

While Korea considered Japanese occupation as a betrayal by the US which is carried forward by North Korea even today; it is true that there was not much that America could have really done.[38] As stated before, Japan had decided to employ a mix of hard and soft power to protect its influence in Korea.

So by 1904 when the war with Russia broke out Japan had already established a strong foothold through positions in the Korean government with sweeping powers over the cabinet's financial decisions, acquired numerous land holdings (legal and illegal) and gained control of the Korean railroad system; telegraph, telephone, and mail systems.

In August 1904 Japan also succeeded in getting its employee Durham White Stevens appointed as an advisor to the Korean Foreign Office effectively disabling the Korean foreign ministry. Stevens gained entry in Korea on the recommendation of Horace Allen who played a significant role in evangelizing South Korea later which we will discuss in the next part. Thus, Japan was already moving towards its goals of effectively occupying Korea in multiple ways through a calculated set of moves.

While it was undoubtedly the fear of occupation and loss of culture which forced Japan to behave in such a cold hearted manner; history has taught us that when you let fear control you the actions you take become so extreme that they result in a tragedy from which it is often difficult to return or recover.[39]

At the 1921-22 Conference of the Limitation of Armament in Washington DC called by the US to limit the naval arms race and work out security arrangements in the Pacific; Syngman Rhee (who would go on to become South Korea's first president) attempted to set the issue of Korean independence as part of the

agenda and cited America's recognition of Korean independence in his campaign.[40] Rhee, the primary signatory to Korea's appeal stated

"It is certain that in 1882 the United States recognized the independence and territorial integrity of Korea by entering into a treaty of amity and commerce with her as a separate national entity. The treaty was in due form. It was ratified by the Senate and in regular course it was formally 'proclaimed' by President Arthur. Japan was the first nation to officially 'congratulate' both Korea and the United States upon its consummation. This fact is noted in the report of Hon. John A. Bingham to Secretary Frelinghuysen, April 14, 1883.[41] As though to emphasize the international effect of this treaty in recognizing this national entity, China protested the sending of Korean ministers to the United States, claiming suzerainty over Korea. The protest was patiently and fully considered on its merits and was overruled. Later China, conceding the position of the United States, also recognized, by specific treaty the independence and separate entity of Korea. Great Britain, France, Germany, Austria-Hungary, Russia, Belgium, Denmark, and Italy, following the course of the United States, also made treaties of amity and commerce with Korea as a separate nation".[42]

Despite all the above, South Korea ironically went on to become a prominent US ally! For Korea, the 35 years under Japanese occupation were terrible. Japan did its utmost to assimilate Korea into Japanese society which meant a complete dilution of Korean culture. The Korean language was forbidden to be taught in schools, palaces and temples were renovated to add influences of Japanese culture and the Korean farmers were forced to grow food for the Japanese. Koreans were encouraged to

adopt Japanese surnames and their women were forced to become comfort women for the Japanese.[43]

Though the 1905 Eulsa Treaty was nullified in 1965 negating any Japanese claims on Korea, many Japanese historians still refuse to accept any wrongdoings by Japan and state that Korea's colonization was effectively responsible for its modernization. In 2009, Jeong Sang-su, a professor in Seoul's Myongji University specializing in international studies and researching declassified files belonging to Germany's foreign ministry since 2007; found two diplomatic documents issued by King Gojong protesting the 1905 Japan-Korea Protectorate Treaty (Eulsa Treaty) signed just four days earlier on Nov 17 and a telegram sent on Nov 26 to US missionary Homer B Hulbert protesting the treaty.

The telegram written in Korean by Gojong and translated and handed over to the German foreign ministry on Nov 24, 1905 confirming the above states, "Japanese officials came to the palace with their army and forced me to sign a document they had prepared. After that Japan named a governor and forced us to give up our diplomatic rights. Such a crime is unacceptable under international law. You [Min Cheol-hun] have to alert Germany and ask for help. The last hope for me and for the empire is Germany and international law".[44]

World War 2

After victory in the Russo-Japanese War, Japan replaced the Russian influence in Inner Mongolia. For Japan reeling with significant war casualties; Manchuria's abundant natural resources were important as an economic lifeline to counter the Great Depression. In 1932, Japan established a puppet nation

Manchukuo in coal-rich northeastern China and Inner Mongolia immediately across Korea's northern border detaching Manchuria from China. Japan seemed invincible; it had managed to achieve both its goals: Korea and Manchuria. Fate however had other plans.[45]

Korea justifiably did not accept the Japanese occupation and the Provisional Government of the Republic of Korea in exile formed on April 13, 1919 in Shanghai. This government was not formally recognized by the world powers though a modest form of recognition was given by the Nationalist Government of China. The government in exile coordinated the armed resistance against Japan in the 1920's and 1930's.[46] Its first president was Syngman Rhee who as we have stated earlier went on to become South Korea's first president. Though Rhee was appointed president of the Korean government in exile he spent most of the period of Japanese occupation in the United States attempting to solicit western moral support.[47] This put him in conflict with the other stalwarts of the government in exile: Premier Yi Tong-hwi who began to seek Soviet military aid for the revolutionary operations in Manchuria; and Police Minister Kim Ku who drew close to the right-wing Chinese Nationalists of Chiang Kai-shek.

From the above we can see that even though Russia lost the war against Japan, it did not stop its efforts to regain influence in Manchuria and Korea. While the USSR and the US were allies in World War 2, they both pursued policies of unity and division for their strategic interests. Hence, the Soviet Union also secretly sponsored the Korean Volunteer Army that fought against the Japanese occupation of Korea and Manchukuo. This volunteer army would go on to form the core of the North Korean military later.[48]

In 1937, World War 2 began in Asia with the advent of the Second Sino-Japanese War.[49] As the war raged on, Japanese labour was inadequate and Koreans began to be recruited to work as labourers in mainland Japan. A year later, the Japanese Imperial Army started enlisting Koreans and by 1944, it was compulsory for all Korean males to contribute to the Japanese war efforts by way of industry or the army.[50]

In 1940, the Korean Liberation Army (KLA) was officially formed under the Provisional Government of the Republic of Korea in exile. This brought together most factions of the Korean resistance groups and KLA declared war against the Axis powers, Japan and Germany on December 9, 1941 under the Chinese Nationalist (Chang Kai-shek) and Chinese Communist (Mao) banners. The KLA was preparing to launch an assault against the Japanese forces in Korea in conjunction with the American Office of Strategic Services (OSS, the predecessor to CIA) but Japan's surrender in 1945 thwarted its plans. However, as Korea's Provisional Government was not formally recognized, it did not have the approval of the other allied nations who signed a peace treaty with Japan at the end of the war.[51]

The Korean Division and Cold War

As World War 2 was coming to an end and Japan's defeat imminent, the Allied powers met at the November 1943 Cairo Conference where Franklin Roosevelt, Winston Churchill and Chiang Kai-shek agreed that Japan should lose all the territories it had gained by force. They also discussed the administration of Japan's occupied territories till elections could be organized and local governments put in place. Here, just like before was the question of Korea, Japan and The Philippines in the region.[52]

The United States was aware that it would have to administer Japan and The Philippines and did not consider Korea a strategic priority. The Soviet Union was more than happy to administer Korea as it would achieve a longstanding geopolitical victory. It would also achieve the reclamation of lands it had lost in the Russo-Japanese War extending the Soviet sphere of influence.[53]

President Roosevelt's aim as the leader of the Allied forces was to ensure post-war conditions for lasting peace. After the devastating attack on Pearl Harbor, he sought a plan to bring the Soviet Union into the Pacific War against Japan and for that he felt it was necessary to accept Soviet influence in both Eastern Europe and Korea. At the 1945 Yalta Conference, the Soviet Union promised that it would join its allies in the ongoing Pacific War in two to three months after victory in Europe in exchange for more territories including portions of Sakhalin, Port Arthur, Manchurian railroads and the Kuril Islands. These secret arrangements between the USSR and the US were in violation of the Soviet-Japanese Neutrality Pact.[54]

For Korea, it finally seemed that independence was just around the corner. By July 1945, the Japanese Army became incapable of holding on and the Allied Powers called for Japan's unconditional surrender at the July 26 Potsdam Declaration; the alternate being "prompt and bitter destruction".[55] While the Japanese Army remained defiant on the outside, their Supreme Council was privately making entreaties to the still neutral USSR for more favourable terms oblivious of the secret arrangement between the UK, USSR and the US at Yalta.

On August 6, 1945 in response to Pearl Harbor, the United States dropped an atomic bomb on Hiroshima. US President

Truman again asked Japan to surrender or "expect a rain of ruin from the air, the like of which has never been seen on this earth". On August 8 in sync with the agreements at Yalta, the USSR declared war on Japan violating its neutrality pact with it. By the 9th, USSR invaded the Japanese puppet state of Manchukuo and its amphibious troops landed at three points on the coast of northern Korea.

The same day, sometime later, the US dropped the second atomic bomb on Nagasaki. Following these events, the Japanese Emperor Hirohito intervened and ordered Japan's Supreme Council to accept the terms laid out in the Potsdam Conference. After several more days of behind-the-scenes negotiations and a failed coup, Emperor Hirohito announced the surrender of Japan to the Allies on August 15, 1945.[56]

The timing of Japan's surrender was grossly miscalculated by the US. The US Army was about 500 miles away while the Soviet forces were already in northern Korea. At this point, the United States was fearful that Soviet troops would completely takeover the entire Korean Peninsula as it did not have a base in Korea then.[57] This massive intelligence failure led them to appoint 2 young officials, Dean Rusk and Charles Bonesteel on August 10 to delineate the US occupation zone in East Asia in less than an hour! Using a National Geographic map the officials chose the naturally prominent 38th Parallel to mark the division ensuring Seoul would be on the American side.

No Korean experts were consulted and the division placed 16 million Koreans in the American zone and just 9 million in the Soviet zone.[58] Surprisingly the Soviets accepted this division immediately which should have set off alarm bells but time was

of the essence and the future of American influence in the Korean Peninsula at stake. These 2 officials were unaware that 40 years back Japan and Czarist Russia had discussed a division of the Korean Peninsula on similar lines![59]

The division of Korea was incorporated into General Order No 1 (approved on August 17, 1945).[60] This division was supposed to be a provisional administrative arrangement and a united Korea was to be brought back under an elected government. By August 24, 1945 the Soviet Red Army reached Pyongyang. As a result, Japanese forces in the north surrendered to the Soviets while those in the south to the Americans.[61]

At the December 1945 Moscow Conference, the Allies agreed that the Soviet Union, the US, China and Britain would participate in Korea's trusteeship upto 5 years leading to its independence.[62] Many Koreans objected to the trusteeship as they wanted independence immediately though the Korean Communist Party that was closely aligned with the Soviet Communist Party supported this trusteeship.

Why? In all probability, the communists wanted the arrangement to become permanent. The Soviet-US Joint Commission met in 1946 and 1947 to work towards a unified Korea but the increasing animosity of the Cold War played spoilsport. It was coming down to an ideological stalemate. The US wanted the entire Korean Peninsula to be democratic and capitalist while the Soviets wanted it to be entirely communist.[63]

In February 1946, the Soviet Union set up a provisional government under Kim Il-sung who was a major in the Red Army and had trained with Soviet troops in Manchuria as the new leader of the occupation zone.[64] In the south, the Americans

appointed anti-communist leader Syngman Rhee to rule. The distrust between North and South Korea deepened and by May 1946 it became illegal to cross the 38th Parallel without a permit.

In 1947, the United Nations was supposed to oversee elections in the north and south to form one democratically elected government. However, with the Cold War gaining momentum the Soviets felt that the UN was institutionally biased towards the US and could not guarantee free and fair elections. It blocked the elections in the north. In April 1948, the leaders from the north and the south met to sort things out but the conference achieved no result. Finally on May 10, 1948 the south held a general election which was protested by many Koreans as they saw it as a prelude to the formal separation of their country.[65]

On August 15, 1948 the "Republic of Korea" came into being with Syngman Rhee as the first president while in the north the "Democratic People's Republic of Korea" (DPRK) was declared on September 9, 1948 with Kim Il-sung as prime minister. Kim Il-sung started developing a cult personality and dubbed himself as the "Great Leader". On December 12, 1948 the United Nations General Assembly declared the Republic of Korea as the "only lawful government in Korea".[66]

The Korean War

At the behest of the Soviets and the Maoist guerrillas in China, Kim Il-sung tried to reunite Korea and overran South Korea in the summer of 1950. The DPRK army engulfed almost 70 percent of the Korean Peninsula. The United States vehemently protested and retaliated with military action with troops from 15 nations without a formal declaration of a war through the UN citation of

a "police action". China formally entered the Korean Peninsula as a player when it backed DPRK. The bloody Korean War began and by the time the hostilities ended on July 1953, 2.5 million people had died and the line of division remained unchanged at the 38th Parallel and came to be known as Demilitarized Zone or DMZ that formally separated North and South Korea.[67]

On July 27, 1953 the Korean Armistice Agreement was signed to "insure a complete cessation of hostilities and of all acts of armed force in Korea until a final peaceful settlement is achieved". The signatories were US Army Lieutenant General William Harrison, Jr representing the United Nations Command (UNC), North Korean General Nam Il representing the Korean People's Army (KPA), and Peng Dehuai for the Chinese People's Volunteer Army (PVA). South Korea was not a signatory to the armistice. This did not mean the end of the Korean War but simply the cessation of hostilities. The armistice signed in 1953 was being discussed by the US since the end of 1950 i.e. just months after the Korean War broke out. The US was pursuing an agreement that would protect the future security of its United Nations Command forces and prevent any reinforcing of air, ground or naval troops on the peninsula. The US also proposed a 20 mile wide DMZ to address the issue of exchange of POW.[68]

While the armistice was always meant to be temporary, both North and South Korea were not happy about the terms. South Korean President Syngman Rhee wanted the ROK army to continue marching north and unify the nation under the south while Kim Il-sung wanted complete unification under the north. Hence South Korea opposed the peace talks while North Korea tried to delay the armistice. Eventually North Korea was

pressurized to support the armistice by USSR and China, the two countries responsible for the war and the armistice was sealed.[69]

The armistice stated that "the governments of the countries concerned on both sides that, within three months after the Armistice Agreement is signed and becomes effective, a political conference of a higher level of both sides be held by representatives appointed respectively to settle through negotiation the questions of the withdrawal of all foreign forces from Korea, the peaceful settlement of the Korean question, etc.".

The armistice was followed by the 1954 Geneva Conference where a formal peace accord was to be signed regarding the Korean War and the first Indo-China War. The Cold War was gaining momentum and thus when Chinese Foreign Minister Zhou Enlai spoke about the Korean Peace Treaty with US Secretary of State John Dulles, (whose brother was Allen Dulles, the head of CIA) he played spoilsport. John Dulles held a very aggressive stance against communism and was aware of the importance of the Korean Peninsula in containing the USSR.[70]

The Korean Peninsula is at the strategic point to intercept the extension of power in Asia-Pacific for both China and Russia. It is also the gateway to check Japan's expansionism on the continent making it integral to the United States Asia-Pacific strategy for maintaining supremacy and preventing a challenger. US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger in his book Does America Need a Foreign Policy? (2001) stated that "A hostile Asian bloc combining the most populous nations of the world and vast resources with some of the most industrious peoples would be incompatible with the American national interest. For this reason, America must retain a presence in Asia, and its geopolitical objective must remain to

prevent Asia's coalescence into an unfriendly bloc (which is most likely to happen under the tutelage of one of its major powers). China has the longest uninterrupted history of any country in the world and is controlled by the last major government to call itself Communist. It is the state with the greatest potential to become a rival of the United States at some point in the new though, in my view, not in the first quarter".[71]

As the armistice was only a military ceasefire and not an agreement between governments, any peace treaty would have also meant the removal of US forces from South Korea. It is not without reason that the US immediately signed US-ROK Mutual Defense Treaty on October 1, 1953 technically breaching the Armistice Agreement and legalizing its military stations in South Korea. On August 8, 1991 both the DPRK and the Republic of Korea were admitted to the United Nations. The absence of the peace treaty and the longstanding stalemate is at the crux of US-DPRK enmity. Today, 65 years after the armistice was signed, the Peace Treaty is still pending which means the Korean War has not yet officially ended.

The US thereafter, to counter the rising Communist Axis of Soviet Russia, Communist China and North Korea created allies in Asia-Pacific by empowering Pacifist Japan's industrialization along with South Korea and other countries like The Philippines under its strategic policy document i.e. Policy for Asia, National Security Document no 48/2.[72] The Korean War changed everything with mega-defence budgets announced by President Truman and the US Army corps doubled with bases across the world from Libya to Morocco to Saudi Arabia transforming the US into a global superpower.

While the Americans embarked on their power play, the Soviets weren't left far behind. They consolidated the Kim Dynasty's hold over North Korea by empowering the communist dictatorship which purged all other competitors and revolutionaries that were a part of Korean Communist Party that fought against Japan in WW2. This is how an obscure Red Army and NKVD confidante Kim Il-sung became the new ruler of the communist dictatorship in North Korea.

The Korean tangle has seen various twists and turns in its long winding road from a Korean Empire to an occupied peninsula; to a communist dictatorship in Democratic Republic of Korea (DPRK) and a democratic prosperous South Korea. The geopolitics in the Korean Peninsula have been fraught with various global powers playing ego games on the landscape be it the Russian Empire, Imperial Japan, Communist China or the United States. One can argue that had the US not double-crossed the Korean king in 1905 by conniving with the British Empire and the bankers on Wall Street and London; or had President Roosevelt not given in to Stalin so easily the story of the Korean Peninsula could have been quite different today.

While the environment of the Cold War or Japanese aggression may have been responsible for the actions of the global giants, the choices a country makes are equally significant in shaping its destiny. While South Korea has chosen a democratic model with technological development as its core, North Korea has created an Axis of Evil by proliferating nuclear and missile technology with China and Pakistan's help throwing all international norms and rules to the wind.

We are again at the crossroads of history. Cold War 2.0 is on the horizon with China becoming the USSR of this century. This will have a tremendous impact on the current global dynamics but before we delve deeper there let us first discuss how differently North Korea and the Republic of Korea have fared post the peninsula's division.

PART II

THE TALE OF TWO KOREAS

"The division of a nation pits a brother against a brother while the foreigners rejoice".

CHAPTER 1

The Republic of Korea

On August 15, 1948 the Republic of Korea popularly known as South Korea/Korea came into being with Syngman Rhee as its first president. It has about 51 million citizens with a GDP of $2 trillion making it one of the wealthiest countries globally. South Korea has witnessed unprecedented urbanization since 1960 resulting in the depopulation of its rural areas and the erosion of the traditional rural lifestyle. In the early 21st century, South Korea's GDP exceeded that of Japan and Taiwan.

Freedom of religion is constitutionally guaranteed in South Korea, and there is no national religion. Christians make up almost 28% with the majority being Protestant (particularly Presbyterians and Methodists), the rest Catholic; Buddhists account for 15% while the rest have no religious affiliations. South Korea's population is mostly ethnic Korean with a small minority of ethnic Chinese Permanent Residents, a few Japanese and Americans including members of the US military. Similar to Japan, South Korea follows a restrictive immigration policy. Its low birth rate could make it the world's oldest country by 2045 and if this trend continues or immigration policies are not relaxed it could even go extinct by 2750.[73]

The American influence brought two things primarily to Korea: development and Christianity. The mainly Protestant Christian missionaries brought western medicine and education and this was not restricted to South Korea but also included the North. We will elaborate on this in the next chapter. Today Seoul is home to 11 of the world's 12 largest Christian congregations. Korea's first president Syngman Rhee was a Protestant and made Christmas a national holiday in 1948, 27 years before Buddha's birthday gained the same status. This was in a country where Buddhism was over 1600 years old!

How did this happen? Under Japanese rule Korea was forced to dilute its Confucian culture. Korea's foreign advisor Durham Stevens was appointed on the recommendation of Horace Allen,[74] the first American Protestant missionary in Korea. Allen paved the way for the Christian missionaries in Korea. Horace Grant Underwood was a Presbyterian missionary and educator who devoted his life to teaching Korean society and bringing it Christianity. He came to Korea in 1885 and worked at Horace Allen's medical centre as a teacher in Physics and Chemistry. His brother John Underwood of the famous Underwood Typewriter Company funded Horace's missionary activities and the Underwood family built schools, hospitals and universities in Korea.[75]

Chinese and French Catholic missionaries also arrived in Korea in the 19th century. The missionaries adopted a system of non-discrimination which attracted the peasant class. The Bible was translated into Hangul, the simple local writing system making it accessible to all. Christianity thus became a source of hope and a form of resistance against Japanese rule. With the end

of Japanese occupation and a Protestant President, Christianity got a free run to prosper.

For a peninsula that was an avowed follower of Neo-Confucianism and considered anything western sacrilege; why was Christianity not considered a tool of western imperialism? The answer as Dr James Grayson, professor of Modern Korean Studies at the University of Sheffield rightly states, "The Korean church has never had to answer questions about association with Western imperialism because imperialism in Korea was Japanese thus annexation provided a link between nationalism and Christianity".[76]

As South Korea developed rapidly evangelization also increased. Its political leadership has largely comprised of either devoutly Protestant or strongly anti-communist leaders resulting in tax-free lifestyles and corruption of the clergy. While the growth of the Protestant Church has now slowed down, the Catholic Church is attracting significant followers and slowly emerging as a significant player in the country. In 1960, Catholics were 2% of South Korea's population; today that number has multiplied almost 6 times. The Catholics in South Korea are prosperous and regular churchgoers who give generously.

Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI on being asked about Korea as the gateway for the Catholic Church to China and Asia has said, "The Church in Asia holds great promise. Korea represents so much; it has behind it a most beautiful history. For two centuries it had no priests and Catholicism progressed thanks to the laity. There were also martyrs. In regard to China, it is a great cultural challenge, very great".[77] There is no Christian state in Asia which is home to over 60% of the world and hence, Catholic missionaries

have been on an evangelization spree and trying hard to create a state in India's Northeast.[78] Hence, South Korea may well hold the secret to the future of the Catholic Church.

Let us now talk about development: South Korea's economy ranks 11th in the world making it one of the G-20 economies. It is a technological powerhouse home to Samsung, LG, Kia, Hyundai etc. and ranks first among the most innovative countries in the Bloomberg Innovation Index. Korea joined the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in 1996 and has generally maintained a positive balance of trade. Its major imports are machinery, mineral fuels, manufactured goods, and crude materials like textile fibres, metal ores and scrap. Principal exports include machinery, electronics, textiles, transportation equipment (notably, automobiles), clothing and footwear. Mineral resources are meagre though its deposits of graphite and tungsten are among the largest in the world. China is the largest recipient of Korea's exports at almost 25% with the United States second at 13% while Hong Kong, Vietnam, Japan, Singapore, Taiwan and India make up the other significant trade partners.

South Korea allocates about 2.6% of GDP and 15 % of all government spending to the military maintaining compulsory conscription for men. Its defence budget, the 11th largest in the world makes it an important ally and buyer for the US Military-Industrial Complex which profits enormously from it. In 1954, the United States and South Korea signed the ROK/US Mutual Security Agreement[79] in which they agreed to defend each other in the event of outside aggression. In 1978, the two countries formed the Combined Forces Command (CFC) based in Seoul with a US general at the helm to defend South Korea. In 2007 they signed a bilateral free trade accord[80] and agreed to a

rearrangement of the military command structure that gave Seoul a greater say in its defence.

Ministry of Unification

The Ministry of Unification is an executive department of South Korea aimed at promoting Korean reunification and was first established in 1969 as the National Unification Board under President Park Chung-hee. The ministry establishes and implements long-term policies for national unification by analysing the political, socio-economic and military aspects of North Korea. It also promotes inter-Korean dialogues, exchanges and cooperation in political, economic, military and humanitarian areas such as South Korean POW's and abductee issues, reunion of separated families and settlement support for dislocated North Koreans.

The ultimate aim of the ministry is the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula by building trust between the North and the South to reduce tensions and create the common prosperity and happiness of 70 million South and North Koreans as one community. The role and scope of the ministry has always been impacted by the political mood in South Korea between its Liberal and Conservative parties that view the North-South divide differently.

South Korea has mainly had Conservative parties come to power who have always adopted a hardline stance and an anti-communism calling card. For most South Koreans, Conservative equals democracy while Liberal equals communism. This thought stemming from the 1950 Korean War holds true even today clearly showing that the rhetoric of anti-communism still resonates

strongly. Younger people and the working class are gradually finding the Liberal Parties more agreeable while the elderly and baby boomer generation are staunchly Conservative. Considering that South Korea has a rapidly ageing population slightly above the global average, political outcomes are still largely determined by the older conservative generation.

The Conservative and Liberal Parties have differing views on many points but the biggest one is in reference to North Korea. The Conservatives are pro-America and support American troops in Korea and harsher sanctions on the North while the Liberals are comparatively lax and would prefer to return to "Sunshine Policy Ideas" to open North Korea.

The Liberals endorse better relations with communist nations like China and North Korea while the Conservatives have always called for a united Korea through South's absorption of the North by the fall of the Kim regime in Pyongyang. It is therefore unsurprising that under Conservative President Lee Myung-bak, the Ministry of Unification was considered to be "under the chopping block" per a leaked Confidential US government cable dated June 18, 2009 ID no. 09SEOUL976_a.[81]

Apart from the current Liberal government under President Moon Jae-in, the previous liberal administrations of Kim Dae-jung and Roh Moo-hyun also witnessed engagement with North Korea reaching its peak. Unfortunately, it also resulted in Seoul sending over 3,000 soldiers to the Iraq War despite a strong anti-war public sentiment and nationwide protests. The FTA's signed with the US and EU during Liberal rule (2007) only furthered the Conservative propaganda of "the Liberals bending to the pressure of the neo-liberal global order" and resulted in Seoul's economy

moving from state-directed to deregulation. All of the above has severely harmed the Liberal Party's image.[82]

According to South Korea's constitution, Koreans in North Korea are the people unable to obtain South Korean nationality because they are under the illegal occupation of the anti-South Korean government group, DPRK. Thus, North Korean nationals born with a Korean parent qualify for South Korean citizenship in accordance with international law. This is applicable to North Korean defectors as well. Case studies of this can also be found in UK's immigration law[83] as UK is home to many North Korean refugees who eventually find their way back to South Korea.

Now we come to the treatment of Chosen-seki (Korean domicile)[84] which is a painful legacy of Japanese occupation. Chosen-seki is the registration status that Japan gave to the Koreans who stayed back after it surrendered during World War 2. The ethnic Koreans in Japan were stripped of their Japanese citizenship by the Allied Powers when Japan gave up sovereignty over Korea. Since North and South Korea did not exist as nation-states at the time, these Koreans in Japan were effectively rendered stateless. To remedy this Japan assigned them the status of Chosen-seki, an alternative nationality for ethnic Koreans in Japan who hold neither South Korean nor Japanese citizenship. The 1966 Agreement between Japan and South Korea granted the Chosen-seki a stable legal status and allowed those with South Korean nationality to request Permanent Residency. As Japan does not recognize North Korea, Chosen-seki by default now refers to the North Korean residents in Japan.

The Conservatives in South Korea have always denied the Chosen-seki from visiting their homeland as they also consider

the Chosen-seki status the equivalent of North Korean citizenship. Article 10 (Guarantee of Entry of Overseas Korean Nationals) of the Inter-Korean Exchange and Cooperation Act states[85], "If a Korean national residing overseas who possesses neither a foreign nationality nor a passport of the Republic of Korea intends to visit and depart from South Korea, he/she shall carry a tourist visa as prescribed in Article 14 (1) of the Passport Act". The purpose of this act was to guarantee entry to ethnic Koreans without citizenship but it has deterred many Chosen-seki status holders from visiting their homeland due to the Conservatives citing it as a security issue. However, during the Liberal presidencies of Kim Dae-jung (1998-2003) and Roh Moo-hyun, (2003-08) ethnic Koreans in Japan that didn't hold Japanese or North Korean nationality were allowed to freely visit South Korea.

Sunshine Policy

The Sunshine Policy[86] officially known as the "Comprehensive Engagement Policy towards North Korea" was first announced by the 15th South Korean President Kim Dae-jung, in 1998 and won him the Nobel Peace Prize in 2000. This policy was also adopted during the Roh Moo-hyun presidency. Bucking the trend, the Sunshine Policy was drawn at a time when North Korea was becoming even more militarily aggressive empowering the South Korean hawks.

President Kim Dae-jung had witnessed the peaceful end of the Cold War in Europe and wanted to bring the South's longstanding confrontation with the North to a non-violent conclusion for which he thought that direct engagement with North Korea was the best policy. Originating from one of Aesop's fables, the Sunshine Policy drew inspiration from West

Germany's normalization efforts towards its eastern counterpart by acknowledging its communist other half as a close nation that was normal and independent. History had shown President Kim Dae-jung that significant economic aid had made East Germany heavily dependent upon West Germany giving the west significant political leverage during unification and eventually resulting in peace. He wished to emulate a similar model to counter North Korea's communist ideology and bring peace to the Korean Peninsula.

The Sunshine Policy was based on three principles per President Kim Dae-jung: South Korea would not forgive any military provocation by the North, it would not attempt to absorb the North by any method and it would put a great deal of effort in enhancing cooperation with the North through substantial investment that would force North Korea to reduce its military spending.

Accordingly, the Kaesong Industrial Region (or KIR), a special administrative industrial region in North Korea where the North and South Koreans could work together was constructed. This resulted in increased economic and cultural exchanges and also benefitted South Korea economically. However, the Conservatives in South Korea felt that this policy amounted to pandering to North Korea as any economic windfall would only mean more money for North Korea's military spending apart from weakening the strategic US-South Korea alliance.

The Sunshine Policy was developed on the premise that good inter-Korean relations would lay the groundwork for unification. Greater engagement would encourage the denuclearization of the peninsula resulting in the eventual unification. While the Liberal

administrations have rightly drawn flak for not denouncing the North's human rights violations in seeking better relations with it and undermining "US-South Korea" ties; it has also only been during their rule that breakthroughs in the stalemate with the North have been made due to their receptive and tolerant stance.

Foreign Policy

South Korea maintains relations with 170 countries with its foreign policy chiefly revolving around North Korea, China, Japan, Russia and its main ally, the United States. Deterrence against North Korea is at the core of US-South Korean foreign policy and partnership. Though both regard North Korea as a hostile nation, South Korea's policies have oscillated from a policy of friendship in the 90's with economic and humanitarian aid in exchange of North Korea giving up its aggressive behaviour to a hardline stance making economic aid contingent to North Korea's denuclearization

South Korea and Japan signed the Treaty on Basic Relations in 1965.[87] China and South Korea have a long hostility dating back to the Korean War that is aggravated by the presence of US troops that China views as a threat to its national security. Despite all this, China and South Korea established formal relations on August 24, 1992 which have grown to $300 billion trade ties between the two countries. In 2016, when South Korea agreed to deploy the THAAD system on its soil, relations between the countries came to an all-time low and killed President Xi's dream to reduce the US influence in South Korea. South Korea similar to the North continues to claim sovereignty over the entire Korean Peninsula and THAAD could shift the North Korea-Russia-

China vs. United States-South Korea-Japan axis in the region greatly upsetting China's grand imperial ambitions.

Agreed Framework

In early 1994, North Korea threatened to convert 8,000 irradiated fuel rods at its Yongbyon nuclear facility to produce 4-5 nuclear weapons. While the IAEA urged the UN to enforce sanctions in violation of NPT, US President Clinton started preparing for a military invasion. Undeterred North Korea began its process for producing nuclear weapons and war on the peninsula seemed imminent. The US considered North Korea's defiance a strategy to negotiate better terms. As a result, former US President Jimmy Carter (on President Clinton's behalf) accepted President Kim Il-sung's invitation for a meeting to diffuse the crisis.

North Korea and the United States reached an "Agreed Framework" Pact[88] in October 1994 to end North Korea's nuclear program in return for economic and political concessions and two proliferation-resistant light water reactors for North Korea through the Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization (KEDO). For the US, the Agreed Framework was primarily a non-proliferation pact while DPRK considered it valuable to finally normalize relations with the US. Under this, the United States was supposed to dispatch an annual shipment of 500,000 metric tons of Oil to DPRK till the completion of the first reactor. It has also been reported that President Clinton agreed to the energy supply plan in October because he thought that the Kim Dynasty would collapse before the nuclear power project was completed and with it, DPRK due to Kim Il-sung's sudden death in July that year.

The US shipments were suspended in 2002 when DPRK was found enriching uranium and KEDO subsequently ceased the construction of the nuclear plant in 2003. North Korea alleged that the United States had been slow in delivering the energy it promised in the Agreed Framework and also accused it of delaying the building of the first light water reactor from 2003 to 2008. The Unites States then ended all diplomatic talks with North Korea in 2001 citing violations of the 1994 agreement and subsequently decreed it part of the "Axis of Evil".

The Six Party Talks

In August 2003 North Korea stated its willingness to attend the Six Party Talks[89] which were a series of multilateral negotiations held from 2003 to 2009 for the purpose of mainly dismantling North Korea's nuclear program. The issues that needed to be resolved were: the security of the North Korean regime, the construction of its light water reactors per the Agreed Framework and the peaceful use of the energy generated, trade normalization, the normalization of diplomatic relations, and irreversible disarmament. The Six Party Talks hosted and chaired by China were attended by Japan, North Korea, South Korea, Russia and the United States.

The negotiations began with North Korea asking for a non-aggression pact with the United States without which a dismantling of its nuclear program was out of question. President George W Bush expressed the possibility of providing an informal security assurance short of a non-aggression pact and indicated the same to China but refused to let any US diplomats engage with North Korea directly till it agreed to "a complete, verifiable, and irreversible dismantlement" of its nuclear program.

In February 2005 North Korea declared that it possessed nuclear weapons and accused the United States of attempting to overthrow its government. On September 19, 2005 the Six Party Talks[90] achieved their first major breakthrough after North Korea came back to the negotiating table on the inducement that the US would recognize it as a sovereign state coupled with a statement that it had no intention to invade it along with accepting its pursuit of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. A joint statement was issued "on the agreed steps toward the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula in a phased manner in line with the principle of commitment for commitment, action for action".

The US and South Korea both affirmed that they would not deploy nuclear weapons on the peninsula. They also stated a willingness to supply North Korea with energy aid along with Russia, China, and Japan. The US and Japan also committed to working at normalizing relations with North Korea. Discussions for the same resumed in 2007 and concluded in an agreement on the initial steps to implement the 2005 Joint Statement under which the US would remove North Korea from its list of state sponsors of terror and terminate the Trading with the Enemy Act clause previously applied (implemented in 2008).

In June 2007, IAEA confirmed that North Korea's Yongbyon nuclear reactor had been shut down and sealed and called for the further disabling of three key nuclear facilities in the complex. North Korea also committed to not transfer any nuclear material, technology or know-how to any third party. By 2008, there was a difficulty in the agreement of a verification system for North Korea's complete cessation of nuclear activities for military purposes. North Korea refused to allow IAEA verifications at other sites in the country and insisted that inspections remain limited

to Yongbyon else it would reverse its disarmament. It later agreed to sampling at other sites verbally but denied actual collection.

In 2009, North Korea test-fired a modified Taepodong-2 three-stage rocket as part of its civilian space program resulting in UNSC sanctions vide the violation of Resolution 1718 and in April 2009, North Korea declared that it would not be a party to the Six Party Talks anymore.

Under President Obama, things went further downhill as he "flatly rejected the idea of negotiating with North Korea without a prior commitment to denuclearization. He also expressed no interest in DPRK's offer to sign a peace agreement".[91] President Obama also empowered the US Military Industrial Complex in the Korean Peninsula. The Rand Corporation, a military think-tank whose publications have revolved around toppling the North Korean regime gained significance and made any negotiations impossible.[92]

In 2006, following North Korea's claim of possessing nuclear weapons and its long-range missile tests; South Korea made cuts in its humanitarian aid. By 2007, there were signs of disarmament by North Korea leading South Korea to continue talks and work towards the gains made during the 90's. In 2008 North Korea missed the deadline to declare its nuclear activities and Seoul again adopted a hardline stand aligning its DPRK policies perfectly with President Obama.

Things changed when South Korea's Liberal President Moon Jae-in assumed office in 2017 with President Trump leading the United States bringing us to the events of today. This time there is a concentrated effort at direct dialogue bypassing China. South Korea and China are both concerned with stability in North

Korea but their foreign policies are in conflict. For South Korea-US, North Korea's denuclearization is mandatory whereas China opposes any joint US-South Korean military exercises in the Yellow Sea[93] which it considers its backyard.

The Roman General Vegetius said "If you want peace, prepare for war". South Korea and its US base will be in North Korea's direct firing line in the case of an armed conflict. Hence, the US military has been trying to move its headquarters out of Seoul. Camp Humphreys in Pyeongtaek built at a cost of $13 billion is out of range of North Korea's multiple rocket launchers and is 40 miles south of Seoul and 60 miles from the DMZ. It opened in 2017 and has been created for just one purpose-WAR.[94]

CHAPTER 2

Democratic People's Republic of Korea

North Korea or the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) was established on September 9, 1948 with Soviet influence under Premier Kim Il-sung. It is the only country in the world to test nuclear weapons in the current century. The Kim family backed first by USSR and later China has established one of the world's most ruthless communist dictatorships in the modern era that is totally closed to the outside world.

DPRK describes itself as a self-reliant socialist state. It is an atheist country where religion is discouraged though there are a small percentage of Buddhists, Christians and followers of Korean Shamanism and Chondoism. DPRK's population is 25 million; almost 40% lives below the poverty line with most earning a meagre $2-3 monthly. DPRK's economy is $28.5 billion a mere fraction of its prosperous neighbour in the south.

Mining and manufacturing form the core of its industry with China accounting for almost 90% of its international trade. North Korea has significant reserves of copper, gold, iron ore, magnesium, nickel, tungsten, magnetite, zinc, graphite, limestone and magnesite. In all, it holds over 200 different minerals with its

magnetite and tungsten[95] reserves being the world's second and sixth largest respectively. It is hugely dependent on the production and export of coal. North Korea has been unable to mine its minerals efficiently due to old technology and energy constraints which have led to higher extraction costs.

North Korea also offers good hydrocarbon potential onshore and offshore.[96] Though its exploration efforts date back to the 70's, it has 7 unexplored basins with three having working petroleum systems. Its largest onshore basin south of Pyongyang is estimated to hold reserves of 1 trillion cubic feet.

Private enterprise is virtually non-existent and the government controls almost every aspect of the economy and sets the production levels for most products. The 2015 UN report has stated that DPRK rakes in a fortune through forced labour[97] in China, Russia, Africa, Europe, Asia and the Middle East. A 2017 Kaspersky Labs report states that DPRK is responsible for cyber-attacks on banks in 18 countries.[98]

After the terrible famine that struck in the 90's, North Korea has become completely reliant on international food aid to feed its people. Yet, it spends over 30 % of its GDP on the military while its citizens are denied basics like food, medical care and education. DPRK citizens cannot leave the country without official permission and in case they are caught they are sent to prison labour camps. The citizens also suffer from a chronic meth epidemic whose production was initiated to negate the lack of industry. While the North Korean citizens languish in poverty, the Kim family fortune is estimated to be in excess of $5 billion.[99]

Let us discuss its formation now. As explained in Part 1, the USSR was playing a secret game to extend its strategic influence

in Korea and by the 1930's, it started orchestrating a "People's Revolution" here similar to the ones underway in most of East Europe. The modus operandi was simple- an initial coalition of communists and other leftist local bodies with the communists eventually calling the shots. However, North Korea was a bastion of conservatives and Christians at the time and lacked leftists. North Korea and Christianity together may sound unbelievable today but this was a reality which we will discuss subsequently.

In absence of a leftist party, the Soviets needed to build one from scratch. The new party launched a daily paper and used a radio network for propaganda called Radio Pyongyang[100] which was launched on October 14, 1945 to honour Korea's Soviet liberators. One of the prominent speakers on the first day was Kim Il-sung, a Pyongyang-born thirty-three year old captain in the Soviet Red Army. Kim Il-sung had not participated in the Pacific War[101] but fought against Japan in Mao's army in 1937 earning a good reputation for himself. For the Soviets, Kim Il-sung's image of a resistance fighter sealed the deal and they persuaded him to assume leadership.[102]

Kim Il-sung had no experience or knowledge of communism or socialism and the same was also true of his comrades. Following the script, Kim Il-sung declared allegiance to the Soviet ideology and adopted Marxism. Like the Bolsheviks he started with land reforms which rapidly endeared him to his people. DPRK would have become just another Soviet satellite had it not been for "Juche".

Juche

North Korea is founded on the ideology of Juche or self-reliance[103] and is described as Kim Il-sung's "original, brilliant and revolutionary contribution to national and international thought" to achieve true socialism. The first documentation of Juche ideology was in a 1955 speech by Kim Il-sung. While socialism has been the hallmark of many countries including USSR and China, North Korea follows a different version that is family centric and places the Kim Dynasty as the fulcrum around which DPRK progresses. One can almost call it a cult that has manipulated its citizens into surrendering all freedoms for the Supreme Leader who decides their education, house, work, family, food, travel etc. in return for a few crumbs.

How has the Kim Dynasty managed to pull this off? We must reflect upon the doctrine of Neo-Confucianism in Part 1 to understand how the Kim Dynasty has brilliantly reinvented a philosophy omnipresent in Korea for centuries to legitimize its domination. Neo-Confucianism is an intolerant philosophy that focuses on the absolute authority of the ruler and the absolute loyalty of his subjects based on the premise that practices of an ordered human community express the principles that govern the cosmos. It emphasizes that individuals should put aside their personal likes/dislikes and focus solely on collective harmony which is determined by hierarchy where the king occupies top place. This makes absolute authority and complete subordination default.

When Kim Il-sung assumed power, his land reforms similar the Joseon in the 13th century were aimed at overthrowing the old power centres during Japanese occupation. This made him

beloved among the lower classes and helped in consolidating his rule.

He furthered his hold by bringing in Neo-Confucian ideals which stated the political system was like a human body with the leader being the brain and the people, its body mandating the citizens to carry out his commands unequivocally to maintain harmony. Kim Il-sung has confirmed that Juche originates from Neo-Confucian ideals and is the source of its political, economic and social system.

As traditional Korean thought placed great emphasis on family, ancestors etc., he cleverly extended the structure of family to himself to integrate the state into complete submission. Similar to ancient Korea where the King was the father of the nation, Kim Il-sung crowned himself as the head of the Korean family replicating the traditional philosophy to curb all dissent and began building his myth. He became the benevolent father who worked hard and sacrificed his sleep for his children, the North Korean citizens and would ensure their protection against all ills of western imperialism. In return he only asked for the small sacrifice of complete submission!

Neo-Confucianism also ensured a significant or complete monopoly over most industries especially strategic commodities. This was based on the premise that the Supreme Leader knows best and "it is not our job to question why as all his actions are for our welfare and it is our duty to obey and maintain harmony in society to keep it away from all western evil".[104]

Kim Il-sung thus cemented his place in North Korea with an iron grip. However, unlike other communist leaders who could not ensure dynastic rule and were subservient to a political party,

he used Neo-Confucianism to also ensure dynastic succession stating it a norm during the Joseon Empire that first adopted the doctrine as a state ideology.

For the success of any policy asserting a divine right to rule; a strong religious or mythological foundation must exist; to prevent dissent or any challengers. Since North Korea was an atheist state, the myth of the Baekdu Bloodline[105] was created enabling regime legitimacy. Mount Baekdu, an extinct volcano on the Korean-Chinese border with a pristine crater lake is considered the ancestral home of the Korean people. The Kim Dynasty propagates that Kim Il-sung fought the Japanese from his base at Baekdu and saved the Korean Peninsula. Baekdu is also the birthplace of Kim Jong-il per DPRK propaganda though in reality he was born in Russia!

Kim Jong-un further consolidated the family rule in his work titled "Let Us Hold Great Comrade Kim Jong-il in High Esteem[106] as General Secretary of Our Party Forever and Successfully Accomplish the Revolutionary Cause of Juche", by modelling North Korean society around Kim Jong-il. This has ensured the legitimization of succession and collective political loyalty to the Kim Dynasty by creating a connection similar to Queen Elizabeth II and Prince Charles or Moses and the Holy Sinai Mountain!

Songun

Songun or "military first"[107] was a policy adopted by Kim Jong-il for domestic governance and foreign policy in the 90's. Its roots can be traced to Kim Il-sung's guerrilla warfare activities against Japan in the 1930's. Songun brought about great importance to the army as "a politics emphasizing the perfect unity and the

single-hearted unity of the party, army and the people, and the role of the army as the vanguards", marking the evolution of Juche in many ways.

Songun increased the role of the Korean People's Army in daily life.[108] The army became omnipresent in social and economic decisions and started participating in large scale infrastructure activities as well. The Korean military also began to get engaged in different types of economic activity including foreign trade and privatization similar to Pakistan's ISI and China's PLA and became very powerful.

Let us first discuss why the shift from Juche to Songun was necessary. The great famine and unwise economic decisions due to following the failed Soviet model resulted in a severe drain on the North Korean economy. Though Juche had persuaded the Korean people to embrace austerity the Kim Dynasty's pursuit of nuclear weapons at all costs for regime survival; necessitated diverting a majority of the country's resources to the military. In such a situation, civilian resentment was inevitable and hence, an environment of military priority for the country's survival had to be created.

Songun represented a hardline version of Neo-Confucianism which stressed on ethnic superiority and patriotism. It used exclusivity to justify the barriers imposed on the public under the supervision of the Supreme Leader to ensure that the DPRK people would remain "The Cleanest Race".[109] Korea's ethno-cultural dilution by the Mongols and Japanese still plays subconsciously in the mind of its people making exclusivity a very saleable proposition. Hence, DPRK's citizens accepted bans on

foreign travel and western information to stay ethno-nationalist easily.

Songun did not actually make the army strong at the expense of DPRK's communist party. Though it was propagated as a new power sharing arrangement, it simply meant that the party in line with the wishes of the Supreme Leader would place the military first to protect the regime and country against invasions. Songun's propaganda is best described as "Let us loyally venerate the party's military-first leadership", cleverly saying victories are the party's and any economic disasters a problem created by the west (namely the United States).

Since the proclamation of Songun in 1995, the Supreme Commander's five-pointed star has become a prominent propaganda motif like the national flag. It is often said that to justify a strong military or authoritarian policy; you need a worthy enemy as the enemy justifies the policy and shakes off the regime's failures. Hence for Songun to work the US needs to remain the capable enemy as its absence means the Kim Dynasty's regime can be questioned.[110]

According to Marxism-Leninism, a communist party's main task lies in infusing the masses with revolutionary consciousness and this varies from place to time depending upon the external environment. In North Korea's case we can similarly see the evolution from Marxist-Leninist to Juche and Songun.

Byungjin

Kim Jong-un was thirty when he assumed office while his father Kim Jong-il became Supreme Leader in his fifties. Kim Jong-il was trained and groomed for his position by Kim Il-sung for ten

years; Kim Jong-un did not have this advantage. Kim Jong-un also had to deal with the military leadership that answered to his father and had built power centres under Songun. Unlike the previous eras when North Korea could remain completely walled off, technology was making absolute control tougher. In such a scenario; an inexperienced Kim Jong-un was aware that consolidating his rule presented a challenge.

He was aware that his father had tolerated the military elite's private enterprises to keep them satisfied and under control as Songun and the declining economy had made it difficult to manage basic government obligations. The elite had started developing a taste for the good life and would become more demanding. The penetration of cell phones in Pyongyang with limited overseas calling permissions (for the elite) also indicated that reforms and economic development would become necessary sooner than later if he wished to maintain his dynastic rule.

Economic reforms become a serious option for any authoritarian country when it reaches the point of diminishing returns to provide for its people. The choice lies between reforms or extreme isolation and surveillance. However, any reforms present a challenge to centralized government control as once the citizens get a taste of freedom they become more demanding. Reforms also pave the way for foreign powers to exploit a country's existing Faultlines. The key here is to adopt the strategy of economic reforms without introducing political reforms.

Kim Jong-un was smart and understood this early on. He first started modelling himself after his grandfather Kim Il-sung who was much loved by the North Korean people. He began emulating his actions and even started dressing like him, the physical

resemblance undoubtedly helped. He also started building the myth of being trained for the top job for years in secret to gain the trust and confidence of the North Korean people. This was important as his inexperience and disconnect with people could facilitate a coup. In 2012, North Korea amended its constitution[111] and proclaimed itself as "an undefeated country with strong political ideology, a nuclear power state, and invincible military power under Kim Jong-un".

In 2013, North Korea adopted Byungjin or the policy of the parallel development of economy and nuclear weapons as strategic guideline and "the lawful prerequisite for revolutionary development" to curb any threats of invasion. Byungjin meant a combination of economic construction and national defence capability to raise the standard of living of the North Korean people under the banner of a strong socialist nation that would advance the Korean unification.

Under Byungjin, DPRK stated that the Party would frame a rational guideline towards solving the country's energy problems based on an independent nuclear energy industry while simultaneously strengthening its nuclear weapons capabilities. This effectively meant that North Korea would not differentiate between the uses of nuclear energy for peaceful purpose from military purpose. Byungjin prioritized the nuclear and munitions industrial sector; electric power, coal, metal and railway transport sectors; new applications of science and technology while rejecting that North Korea must make the strategic choice of denuclearization as a primary means of economic survival further showing that any sanctions were self-defeating.

In 2013, DPRK revised its founding principles after 39 years to enshrine the hereditary transfer of power to the Kim Dynasty[112] and legitimized Kim Jong-un's rule. Clause 2 of Article 10 now states that the party and revolution must be carried "eternally by the Baekdu bloodline" referring to the Kim Dynasty. The phrase "completion of communist achievements" has been deleted establishing absolute rule and effectively making North Korea a kingdom that will be ruled by the Kim Dynasty in perpetuity.

Kim Jong-un is simultaneously letting the military elite prosper in their private enterprises while continuing to use the coercive tools embraced by his father and grandfather. He has used force to quell dissent and carried out an unprecedented purge of over 300 members. In complete contradiction of Neo-Confucian values he has not even spared his family members. When Kim Jong-un led his father's funeral procession, he was flanked by his father's core team of generals and this included his uncle and mentor Jang Song-thaek.[113] None of these generals are alive today. Kim Jong-un's father had suggested that Song-thaek could become regent in his absence and play an advisory role for Kim. Kim Jong-un clearly feels that he needs no advisors.

Kim Jong-un also ordered the murder of his half-brother Kim Jong-nam in Malaysia in 2017.[114] Jong-nam was a threat as he was also a descendent of the Baekdu Bloodline. Kim Jong-nam is survived by a son Kim Han-sol who is now in hiding. Han-sol was rescued by the Cheollima Civil Defense Group with the help of China, the United States, the Netherlands, and a fourth, unnamed country. He has championed democracy, peace, and diplomacy and remains on Kim Jong-un's hit list.[115]

Byungjin is a shift from Songun where the military is not formally downgraded but there is a clear rebalancing of power within the country. The military is no longer the sole power behind the throne; securing Kim Jong-un's rule and showcasing his caring and benevolent side to the citizens. Byungjin has reaffirmed the supremacy of the party and with it, Kim Jong-un's rule over the military.

Kim Jong-un has used Byungjin effectively to push back the uncontrolled and dangerous elements in the military that could challenge him while building his profile as a strongman who can stand up to the West. The willingness to reform also provides the charade of greater "people's involvement" which could serve as North Korea's breakout strategy for survival as a nuclear weapons state. Hence, Byungjin cleverly kills two birds with one stone. It takes the myth of Kim Il-sung and builds upon it, justifying not only Kim Jong-un's rule but also his whims, fancies and insecurities to ensure the rule of the Kim Dynasty.[116]

Foreign Policy

DPRK maintains diplomatic relations with many countries. It has bilateral relations with Palestine, Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic, Argentina, Botswana, Chile etc. The United States, South Korea, Israel, Estonia, France, and Japan don't recognize it as a nation state.

DPRK owes its survival as a separate political entity to China and the Soviet Union. Since the Korean War China and Russia have continued to provide it with critical military assistance and access to their markets. They are also the main suppliers of Oil

and basic necessities along with providing diplomatic support which continues to this day.

USSR established diplomatic ties with South Korea in 1990. After its fall in 1991, South Korea established relations with the Eastern bloc countries in Europe in reciprocation and later with Beijing (1992). As a weaker Russia was plagued with its own political issues, trade with North Korea declined creating a vacuum which was filled by China and China thus became DPRK's primary influencer. The 1961 Sino-North Korean Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance also oblige China to come to North Korea's aid in event of an attack.[117]

In 1995, Russia renounced the 1961 North Korea-USSR defence treaty. In 2000, Russia and North Korea signed a new treaty of friendship,[118] good neighbourliness and cooperation. The new treaty places emphasis on boosting trade while excluding the military assistance clauses present in the 1961 Treaty. It does however contain a clause in which both countries have agreed to not back any state which attacks the other. This means that Russia would no longer be obligated to militarily assist North Korea except in the event of invasion indicating Russia's preference for a stable peninsula for economic gain.[119]

Seoul and Pyongyang signed the Agreement on Reconciliation, Nonaggression, Exchanges, and Cooperation on December 13, 1991.[120] The agreement called for reconciliation and nonaggression on the Korean Peninsula. This was the first time North Korea officially recognized its southern neighbour which is also its second largest trading partner on good days.

North Korea views the United States as the strongest imperial force in the world and a successor to Japanese imperialism. Their

relationship has been marked with continuous distrust and accusations. We have expanded on the US dynamics with North Korea in the previous chapter in reference to the 1994 Agreed Framework and Six Party Talks. This framework served as the backdrop of South Korean President's Kim Dae-jung's Sunshine Policy. North Korea and the US blame each other for the failure of implementation.

After North Korea's nuclear test in 2006, it was sanctioned by the UN with additional measures in 2009, 2013, 2016 and 2017.[121] In 2016, North Korea conducted its fourth nuclear test and followed it with a satellite launch and test launches of several missiles. The United States Treasury Department also called for a prohibition on US financial institutions opening or maintaining correspondent accounts, receiving deposits or making payments on behalf of any foreign institution backed by North Korean financial institutions.

Axis of Evil

How can a heavily sanctioned country with a low GDP that is unable to feed its people build such a strong nuclear program? It obviously means that North Korea is not doing this alone. So who are the other players and how is this possible?

Before we unravel the criminal activities of the North Korean regime let us understand its functioning. DPRK's criminal syndicate works through the secretive Office 39, an organization within the Korean Worker's Party Secretariat that operates through the KWP's Central Committee. Based in Pyongyang, Office 39 mainly operates through front companies such as Daesung Chongguk with offices in Austria and Zokwang Trading Company

which has an office in Macau. Office 39[122] operates through a web of companies in multiple illegal activities like Drug Trafficking, Money Laundering, Counterfeiting and Nuclear/Missile trade and proliferation with Macau[123] being the preferred route for its illegal activities with diplomatic passports and lax banking laws.

Due to pressure from the US Treasury and UN sanctions vide UNSC Resolution no. 2270 of 2016; the North Korean companies have moved some of their activities to tax havens like Singapore etc. US Treasury sanctions forced Macau to freeze $25 million of DPRK accounts in Banco Delta Asia. As a result the Zokwang Trading Company closed its Macau headquarters and relocated to Zhuhai in Mainland China.

Office 39 abets narcotics trade by using North Korean military and commercial vessels to transport drugs globally using diplomatic personnel to escape seizures and scrutiny. Such activities have been busted many times. In 1996, a North Korean envoy was caught with 50 pounds of heroin in Russia and in 1998, the Egyptian police arrested a North Korean diplomat who was trying to smuggle and sell 500,000 tablets of Rohypnol. Similar arrests have also been made by German and Chinese authorities.

To counter this, North Korea is now outsourcing its illegal activities to criminal groups like the Russian mafia or Taiwanese Organized Crime Syndicate that have the regime's patronage. The US has also busted huge volumes of its counterfeit currency[124] since 2005 in mostly $100 bills. In 2007, a Chinese businessman was also arrested for laundering US currency linked to North Korean WMD proliferation.

A North Korean defector[125] revealing the secrets of Office 39 has stated that DPRK imports nearly 300,000 tonnes of Oil

products from Russia each year from Vladivostok and Nakhodka ports in its Far East. Russia is one of the biggest suppliers of Oil and Petroleum products to North Korea and in its earlier role as the USSR also supplied[126] T-62 tanks in the late 60's and early 70's, 17 MIG 29 Fulcrum multirole fighter jets and 36 SU-25 Frogfoot attack jets.

North Korea also serves as China's liaison and carries out its dirty work while granting China plausible deniability. For example, it exported 17 Chinese Romeo class submarines along with a huge missile arsenal to Pakistan in return for nuclear blueprints. It is no secret that AQ Khan, the father of Pakistan's nuclear bomb traded the nuclear blueprints obtained from Dutch laboratories with Iran and North Korea. Khan then setup offices in Dubai, a factory in South Africa, imported electronics from Turkey and centrifuges from Malaysia to design the final product in China!

In August 2002, CIA also found a Pakistani C-130 jet in North Korea with missile technology which it believed to be a trade-off for nuclear centrifuges. This shipment was part of the Khan Network and captured by American spy satellites with the US choosing to stay mum at the time. The C-130 jet was part of the US military aid requested by Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf to hunt down Al Qaeda![127] The US blew the cover on this much later and its details are part of international investigations which BBC also telecasted in the 2007 Terror Trader.[128]

The Pakistani quid pro quo[129] with North Korea and China is not limited to nuclear weapons or their blueprints but also includes proliferation of ICBM technology for missiles like No Dong (renamed Ghauri) for Pakistan. North Korean experts were

also present to help Pakistan conduct its successful April 1998 ICBM launch that is capable of delivering a nuclear payload anywhere in India. This exposure also led to US sanctions on the Khan Network in violation of MTCR. This nexus was further corroborated when an Indian customs official seized a North Korean ship off India's Kandla port[130] in July 1999 carrying scud missiles parts and blueprints to Pakistan. Pakistan has also been trying to obtain the blueprints of the Taepo Dong missile from North Korea entrenching itself completely into the Axis of Evil with North Korea and China.

Iran has also participated in proliferation of nuclear and missile technology from North Korea. Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, the father of Iran's nuclear program has overseen many weapon technology imports from North Korea. In his journal entry dated March 9, 1992 Rafsanjani has[131] gloated over the fact that the US caught only one North Korean vessel sailing to Syria while failing to detect two other DPRK vessels which landed on Iranian ports days later. Several companies facilitating clandestine trade between Iran and North Korea have been sanctioned by the US Treasury and EU like Saeng Pil Trading Corporation that were brokering deals on Chinese-origin precision guided munitions systems. Iranian engineers from the sanctioned Shahid Hemat Industrial Group also attended a failed launch of North Korean rockets in 2012.[132]

Syria also shares a relationship with North Korea dating back to the Cold War when Moscow bankrolled the Syrian military with scud missiles, multiple rocket launchers and anti-tank weapons in collaboration with North Korea which provided vital military personnel for combat roles, reconnaissance and training. North Korea also provided technicians, tank men and engineers

to Syria in 1970 and its pilots took an active part in training the Syrian Air force during the Arab-Israeli War.

The collaboration between North Korea, Syria and Iran[133] is deeply entrenched with Iran leading the charge of Hezbollah brigades and North Korea providing technical support via arms pipelines in return for Oil & Gas. In 2002 North Korean components, scientists and technicians arrived in Syria to build a nuclear reactor for developing nuclear weapons at Bashar Al Assad's request. There have also been reports that several Iranian and North Korean advisors and Syrian technicians were killed during the loading of a chemical warhead containing VX and Sarin onto a Scud missile for a test-launch on July 27, 2007.

In 2007, Israel's Mossad discovered proof of a Syrian reactor that was only months away from being operational. Mossad discussed this with their counterparts in Washington who were hesitant to launch a strike due to the fallout of false WMD reports in Iraq. Mossad unilaterally launched Operation Orchard[134] in 2007 after President Bush said he would not block the action and destroyed the reactor before it went online. Syria did not retaliate as any action would have confirmed its nuclear intent and simply said that Israel had tried to violate Syrian airspace and after being detected the Israeli aircrafts dropped their ammunition in the desert and retuned. This strike has now been officially admitted[135] by Israel in March 2018.

The 2018 UN Panel Report of Experts[136] on North Korea states that North Korea earned nearly $200 million from exporting coal and other banned commodities in violations of its sanctions. The Panel also uncovered more than 40 previously unreported shipments from 2012-2017 to front companies for Syria's

Scientific Studies Research Council which manages its chemical program. The report also states that North Korean technicians continue operating at chemical and missile facilities in Barzei, Adra and Hama. It also revealed the sale of North Korean ballistic missile systems and conventional weapons including multiple rocket launchers and surface-to-air missiles to Myanmar.

This is a mere glimpse of how DPRK carries out its illegal activities with global crime syndicates and rogue nations. It reveals that North Korea has been able to consistently evade sanctions, adapt and continue trade backed by its resilient relationships with countries which form the Axis of Evil.

The Rare Earth Treasure

We have seen how North Korea has hoodwinked the global community to achieve its ambitions but what is making other countries throw caution to the winds? Why are they lining up to befriend it suddenly?

The answer is the lure of trillions of dollars of Rare Earth Minerals (REM) which North Korea holds. As per recent studies from the South Korean mining institutes and USGS, North Korea holds REM's worth $7-8 trillion[137] making them the largest in the world. The REM's hold Rare Earth Elements[138] like monazite (cerium and neodymium), bastnasite (primarily cerium), britholite (cerium) and secondary minerals like cerite (cerium), fergusonite (primarily yttrium), and gadolinite (cerium, lanthanum, neodymium, and yttrium). REM's are used in hi-tech sectors like smartphones and other electronic gadgets. While the valuation does not translate into equivalent revenues; the REM's

have the potential to solve all of North Korea's problems and fund several more generations of the Kim Dynasty.

In 2013, Dr Schurmann a geologist working with SRE Minerals also confirmed the above. The location, Jongju in the northern Pyongyang Province is estimated to hold 6 billion tons of REM's with 216.2 million tons of REE's. UK based SRE has signed a 25 year JV with DPRK's state-owned Korean Natural Resource Trading Corporation for the rights to develop all REE deposits within Jongju. The venture- Pacific Century Rare Erath Minerals Limited was registered in British Virgin Islands by Mossack Fonseca infamous for their association with the Panama Papers per an expose reported in ABC News[139] and was executed by Australian and British investment bankers. HDR Salva Resources, a leading Australian mining and geological consultancy is SRE's technical representative for the project.

The biggest benefactor of the North Korean mining sector has been China with the best access to North Korean REM's. In 2015, it imported iron ore worth $73 million and zinc worth $6,80,000 in exchange for large shipments of coal to North Korea. After the 2016 UN Sanctions targeting North Korean REM's exports and imports, exports to China were banned in retaliation to China's coal suspension but resumed a few months later. A Yonhap News agency[140] quoting South Korean data shows that despite UN Sanctions, China continues to import REM's and metals like zinc, copper and silver from North Korea. China is already mining precious resources in Africa and Afghanistan aggressively as elaborated in our book "The New Global Order" and there is no way it will allow the North Korean treasure to move away from its influence easily.

Jerusalem of the East

As stated in Part 1, Christian missionaries targeted the Korean Peninsula extensively during the Joseon era. South Korea is proof of their success today. However, it was not Seoul but Pyongyang that was the centre of Christianity in Northeast Asia and renowned among American Christians and proselytizers as the "Jerusalem of the East".

It is not without reason that the Pope gives attention to South Korea as the gateway to China, one of the longstanding targets of the Church. This can be further corroborated by Vatican's compromise with China's Communist Party[141] to maintain a presence in the country for harvesting at the right time. Reports of underground Christianity from North Korea are now getting stronger due to South Korea's increased efforts to spread the gospel to their "uncivilized brothers in the North". Pyongyang also houses an Eastern Orthodox Church: The Church of the Life Giving Trinity, the only Orthodox one in the country built in 2003 after Kim Jong-il's 2002 visit to Russia's Far East.

Korean history between the 18-19th century saw significant Christian activity. Pyongyang was the centre of Asia's Presbyterian Church and home to thousands of Korean Christians. Though Christianity was banned by the Joseon regime since 1758 fearing dissent, the Friendship Treaty signed between the United States and Korea (1882) opened the floodgates for American Presbyterian Missionaries notably a medical doctor named Horace Allen. Allen became physician to the king and also worked as a diplomat and a Korean minister's secretary to the US. For Allen who was first sent to China for missionary activities but failed, Korea's opening

seemed perfect to carry out his religious and political ambitions and he executed these with a vengeance.

Allen established Korea's first western medical hospital: Chejungwon in 1885. During the 1884 Gapsin Coup, he saved the life of Min Young-ik, a royal whose condition was fatal through western medicine. With this, he gained the confidence of the Korean Emperor and proposed setting up a western hospital that he would serve without remuneration for the welfare of the Korean people. As with all missionaries, noble gestures are never solely restricted to healing and always include conversion, and Chejungwon too served as an essential outpost of complete missionary activities.[142]

Missionaries from the Methodist and the Catholic Church followed and by 1910, Christians in Korea helped by the Church-funded revival movements numbered 200,000 in a land of 13 million people. The most significant one was "The Great Pyongyang Revival" in the wake of the Russo-Japanese War which had made Koreans highly antagonistic towards the Japanese. This revival was planned after Christian missionaries tasted great success in India's Khasi Hills Revival Project (1905-06) modelled on the combined efforts of Presbyterian and Methodist missionaries praying together for "greater blessings".[143] Presbyterian missionaries preached to thousands of Korean men to turn away from their hatred of the Japanese and embrace Christ for survival. They asked the Korean people "to repent for their hatred and call on God for forgiveness". This movement alone led to the conversion of over 50,000 people in one year making Pyongyang the most heavily Christian city in Korea.[144]

In 1890, Allen was appointed as Secretary of the US legation and in 1897 he became the Counsel General in Korea. He was also able to influence the Korean Government into awarding American companies mining concessions in the Woon-san gold mine and Seoul-Incheon railway construction rights. The Korean Emperor probably thought that granting greater concessions to the United States would ensure its intervention in the Russo-Japanese fight to occupy Korea but as time would reveal, he was highly mistaken.[145]

Gradually the American missions started penetrating the countryside gaining entry in both rural and urban Korea and included western medicine, science, and education. Prominent American families funded hospitals and schools as parts of their mission some of which survive today as leading South Korean institutions such as Yonsei University (est. 1915 as Chosun Christian College by Horace Grant Underwood), Severance Hospital (1885 by Underwood) and Ewha Womans University (1886). In Pyongyang they were the Union Christian College (1897), Union Christian Hospital, the Presbyterian Theological Seminary etc. Reverend George Shannon McCune, the head of Union Christian College was awarded the Order of Merit for National Foundation in 1963 for bringing religion and education to South Korea. Hence, South Korea's strong Christian roots come from Pyongyang which Seoul is now reciprocating. We have also discussed the contribution of the Underwood family in the previous chapter.

The Catholic Church in South Korea also considers the Korean Peninsula ripe for harvesting with China its end goal. It dubs the region collectively as "the last frontier" and maintains a presence in North Korea as well. Officially, Christianity is not

allowed in North Korea and the Bible is banned. If an individual is found to be Christian he could be executed or sent to a labour camp for thirteen years. Interestingly, the $35 million Pyongyang University of Science Technology, the country's only foreign university is Christian and caters only to students from elite families. Most of the teachers are Christian missionaries who are not allowed to overly proselytize but make it subtly known that the only way for the country to ascend is "the strength of Jesus Christ even in North Korea". For the heavily funded South Korean churches, there is a great opportunity of pay to play as the Pyongyang University funding has granted them access to a lot of significant people in DPRK who have the power to decide who can and cannot enter the hermit kingdom.

South Korean Christians under Operation Dandelion are also carrying trying to bring the gospel to the North Korean people through aerial operations. Since 1991, every week hundreds of orange balloons inscribed with the 16 chapters of Mark in the Korean language float in the Korean airspace. For the Church, this kind of power play is nothing new. It has played a similar role during the World Wars and with Christians on the decline in EU it sees North Korea as a country to consolidate its power and this is an opportunity the Church will clearly not let go of.[146]

The tale of the 2 Koreas could not be starker. While one is a thriving technological powerhouse with a booming economy, the other is a rogue state with criminal syndicates abetting proliferation of arms and nuclear technology to the Axis of Evil with China's active connivance. In 2017, the world has seen North Korean aggressions increase significantly. The US under President Trump has made it clear that it won't tolerate North Korean provocations

yet this is easier said than done given the intertwined relationship China, Russia, Syria, Iran and Pakistan have with North Korea.

While there is no doubt that the North Korean regime must be reined in; an unbiased examination of North and South Korea raises a critical question. Did the US not want the 1994 Agreed Framework and Sunshine Policy to succeed which has resulted in the culmination of a global threat today? If yes, then why and what has changed now?

After the Agreed Framework was signed, the US government changed from Democratic to Republican. While the Clinton administration probably viewed the peace pact as a stop gap arrangement, the incoming administration under President George Bush Jr made no secret of its dislike. It further embarked on an invasion strategy empowered by the Neo-Cons in the administration. The Iraq invasion citing WMD's followed and the Middle East was set on fire. For Bush an aggressive North Korea threatening South Korea and Japan seemed no different than Iraq and Iran. It is thus unsurprising that he clubbed DPRK together with the "Axis of Evil".

The possible success of the Agreed Framework and the Sunshine Policy prompted Japan to join the efforts in normalizing relations with North Korea at the first Japan-North Korea Summit in 2002. Both countries signed the Pyongyang Declaration[147] and "shared recognition establishing a fruitful political, economic and cultural relationship between Japan and the DPRK through the settlement of unfortunate past between them".

These events forced the Bush administration to re-think their Korea strategy seriously. An independent economic-political block consisting of Japan and a unified Korea could pose a serious

strategic threat to US dominance in East Asia. This thought could have led to a deliberate sabotage of impending peace on the Korean Peninsula leaving the Kim Dynasty with no option except embarking on a nuclear journey to protect its regime and North Korea's sovereignty, the actions of which are visible for all to see today!

This brings us to the important question- what has changed? Why is the US now willing to discuss peace with North Korea? The answer is the rise of China. Nothing brings countries together than a common enemy and the slightest possibility of war can even ally strong countries making the fulcrum i.e. the US powerful. While a war may not be imminent on the Korean Peninsula; till the Axis of Evil exists the danger of a military escalation spiralling out of control remains. As the world slowly moves towards bipolarity the US will attempt to mark out its sphere of influence clearly while an aggressive North Korea, a resurgent Russia and an expansionist China jostle with the changing dynamics. We can already see signs of this tussle in the Third Korea that we will discuss next.

CHAPTER 3

The Third Korea

The Third Korea refers to the Yanbian Korean[148] Autonomous Prefecture in China's Northeast Jilin Province. Yanbian borders Heilongjiang in the north, Baishan and Jilin City in the west, North Korea's North Hamgyong Province in the south and Russia's Primorsky Krai in the east. Yanbian is a strange world where the communist North and capitalist South meet in a province overseen by China! The ethnic Korean population here is almost 2 million at about 35%. They not only dominate the region demographically but have maintained their culture, tradition and identity over the decades.

Korea's occupation by Japan in the 19th century witnessed unprecedented migration into China and this included Kim Il-sung who went to school here. It was from the Third Korea that he joined China's Communist Party, commanded a guerrilla unit and fought against Japan in Mao's Army before assuming North Korean leadership under Soviet advice.

By 1945 there were around 1.7 million ethnic Koreans living in China and from these almost a million decided to stay back while the rest moved home to North Korea. Many among them participated in the Chinese Civil War fighting for the communist

party and their contribution was recognized with Mao's incoming communist government rewarding them with an autonomous region emulating the Soviet quasi-statehood model.

Hence most people living along these borderlands have mixed heritages and this is visible everywhere from food, education, shops, retail stores, business etc. Korean and Chinese are both recognized as the official languages of the province by China and all shops have to display signs in both languages. Primary and secondary level education in Korean is compulsory for the ethnic minority population. China's Communist Party subsidizes Korean language schools and publications while ensuring that no Korean resurgence or irredentism emerges in the province.

However, this is an irrelevant concern currently as the ethnic Koreans identify themselves as Chinese and are voluntarily assimilating into the mainstream Chinese culture even choosing to attend Chinese language schools over the Korean ones. Despite holding onto their heritage, the ethnic Korean residents show no desire to unite with DPRK preferring their prosperous life in China.

Yanbian is where the businessmen from the north and south meet, where the government officials from both countries meet and also where South Korea's aggressive evangelists meet with their northern counterparts to talk and trade on Chinese territory which plays the role of a neutral ground. Yanbian is also where the North Koreans flee from the oppressive Kim regime hoping that the Chinese police will not send them back.

However, China and DPRK's changing dynamics could impact Yanbian and the Korean Peninsula's status quo. North Korea's nuclear and missile tests routinely affect Yanbian with

minor earthquakes due to its proximity. Economic ties are getting impacted as well. Kim Jong-un's adventures are also costing the Yanbian traders who have manufacturing facilities in North Korea as China routinely reciprocates by shutting down the border forcing them to consider other alternatives now.

North Korea illicit drug smuggling is also impacting Yanbian directly. DPRK has been leveraging its cultural ties with the ethnic Koreans in Yanbian to facilitate its meth smuggling; unfortunately this has resulted in a huge meth addiction locally (almost 50% increase) forcing the Chinese police to intervene. This has resulted in routine drug seizures by China which has not gone down well with North Korea further.

The unfinished bridge between China's Dandong and North Korea's Sinuiju[149] is another reflection of the souring ties between China and North Korea. Dandong though not in Yanbian but the Liaoning Province is another city where a bulk of trade takes place with North Korea. Dandong was a $5 billion carrot given by China to North Korea to behave itself featuring luxury apartments, malls, two special economic zones etc and a $300 million bridge on the Yalu River as a reflection of their relations. Over 30,000 North Koreans work here making it one of the few places where North Koreans can work outside their borders. These workers repatriate their earnings to the North Korean government making it a good supply of hard currency for the regime.

Many elite officials from Pyongyang live in Dandong and send their kids to school here. There is even a school run by American Missionaries here, the Eaglebridge International School. Kim Jong-un's uncle and second in command Jang Song-thaek was a strong advocate of North Korea-China ties and the driving

force behind economic cooperation in Dandong whom Kim later denounced as "a traitor for all ages".[150]

The above events and increased visits to South Korea by the Chinese ethnic Koreans have started impacting the borderlands. Yanbian is slowly and steadily importing more South Korean culture and products such as food, fashion, books, public bathing houses and karaoke bars. Their lifestyle is also getting strongly influenced by South Korea in whom they see a new love and as the generations change, the reminiscing of ties with North Korea is getting diluted.

South Korea's 1996 Law on Immigration that allowed for easier immigration by the Chinese ethnic Koreans has resulted in significant migration (0ver 700,000) skewing the balance in Seoul's favour. Thus, if the Kim Dynasty was to be taken out of the equation with Seoul's dominion extending upto the Chinese border; the current indifference towards the peninsula's unification by the Korean Chinese could change. China has probably anticipated this and is gradually sending more Hans to live in Yanbian repeating its Xinjiang strategy.[151]

The Northeastern Chaos

There is also another interesting story about North Korean claims over China's Northeast, a view which has been maintained by successive generations of the Kim Dynasty. In May 2000, Kim Jong-il made his first trip to China after becoming Supreme Leader. Though it was an informal visit, he requested China's then President Jiang Zemin if he could make arrangements for "his inspection of the northeast region" clearly stating ownership of the region. President Zemin naturally found this disrespectful

and asked him "that the North Korean leader meant visit and not inspection correct" to which Jong-il said "No, It is an inspection. My father Kim Il-sung, North Korea's first leader told me that the entire northeast belongs to us per a remark made by Chairman Mao Zedong"!

President Zemin naturally found this shocking and asked an official from the Communist Party's International Liaison Department to check whether Mao had actually made such a remark in the past. Unfortunately for China, the official confirmed Chairman Mao's remarks.

According to Professor Shen Zhihua specializing in history at Shanghai's East China Normal University; Chairman Mao's remarks to Kim Il-sung were as follows:

"Your ancestors say the Sino-North Korean border is the Liao River. Our ancestors say the border is the Yalu River. As things stand now, you have been pushed south of the Yalu River. It is something cruel. But this is not my fault. Feudalism oppressed you Koreans. All is the work of Empress Wu Zetian, Emperor Taizong of the Tang dynasty and Emperor Yang of the Sui dynasty".

Thus Chairman Mao clearly stated that the Korean Peninsula's border should be at the Liao River that runs through China's Northeast Liaoning Province instead of the Yalu River that serves as the current border. Before signing the 1961 Friendship Treaty, Kim Il-sung broached the topic again and asked Chairman Mao to cede Ji'an city in China's Jilin Province that shares borders with North Korea and Russia as a small concession. Chairman Mao denied this demand but told Premier Zhou Enlai to demarcate Mount Baekdu and more than half of Lake Heaven that is revered by both the Manchus and Koreans as North Korean territory.

After Chairman Mao's death when North Korea raised the topic again with Deng Xiaoping, he ignored it. Deng further opened China up to the world and even normalized ties with South Korea leaving the territorial claim issue unresolved.

In the wake of these claims, it is interesting to note that when North Korea carried out its 6th nuclear test on September 3, 2017 its state media while making the official announcement to its citizens and the world showed Supreme Leader Kim Jong-un standing at the Heaven Lake shore looking beyond the revered mountain. This was Kim's fifth climb following which something significant has always followed. The spiritual aspect aside, this was perhaps a sign that Kim Jong-un is ready to up the ante on China. Considering that both China and North Korea are revisionist powers, the question that arises is- if China is willing to go back many centuries why should Korea restrict itself to the era of Japanese imperialism?

In the event of unification, Goguryeo could be the key to unite both the Koreas towards a common enemy, China instead of the traditional enemy, Japan! North Korea filed a UNESCO application for the Goguryeo tombs on its soil in 2001. In 2003 and 2004, as part of the Northeast Project, China also applied to UNESCO to register its Goguryeo tombs in Manchuria as a World Heritage Site while its Foreign Ministry removed all references of pre-modern Korean history from its website. China played dirty at UNESCO and delayed North Korea's application.[152]

Ultimately both applications were approved together in 2003 beginning China's appropriation of Goguryeo heritage. This sparked off a wave of Goguryeo resurgence in Seoul as well who summoned the Chinese Ambassador to register protest at the

distortion of Korean history. South Korea further established the Goguryeo Research Foundation in 2004.

In 2013, China assembled a research team to study the discovery of the Goguryeo stele or memorial stone[153] that was found in Jilin Province's Ji'an city. This was the third such discovery. Many scholars in the research team were also a part of China's Northeast Project which aims at distorting Goguryeo[154] history to incorporate it into Chinese history and eventually claim the historical Goguryeo territories (Manchuria and Unified Korea) as Chinese. Today these would include parts of South and all of North Korea, Northeast China and a bit of maritime Russia. China is playing the long game here. By isolating Goguryeo from the Korean Peninsula, China is irking South Korea and also indirectly staking claim to all of North Korea as Chinese territory countering any Kim Dynasty claims to Northeast China.

The Faultlines

China's Northeast especially the Liaoning and Jilin Provinces are heavily industrialized and are called the rust belt where its major steel and coal factories are powered employing millions. These provinces powered the China growth story and carry a high debt to revenue ratio. They are also very fertile making up the small percent of China's agricultural land with the Liao River known as Northeast China's mother river. With US President Trump's declaring tariffs on China's steel industry along with the increasing push towards automation, this region will witness half a million job losses as China eliminates upto 150 million tons of steel making capacity.

China has decided to set up a $100 billion fund to help the unemployed in the wake of growing protests by the labour classes who have not been paid.[155] These protests are only going to increase and envelop not just the labour class but the white collared too. The first 10 weeks of 2018[156] have already witnessed over 400 publicly reported strikes, a double of the previous year! Social instability in Northeast China could witness the further deepening of Faultlines as there is a significant presence of Manchus, Koreans and Mongols here. The Manchus are ethnically and linguistically closer to the Japanese and Koreans than the Han and have been at odds with the dominant Han despite China's efforts to amalgamate Manchuria in the One China family.

Inner Mongolia is another long running ethnic conflict in Northeast China and continues as an autonomous province under China. China has used its model of Han migration here as well. Inner Mongolia has shown one of the highest growth rates in China but this has come at a price. The coal mining activities controlled by the Han have caused huge environmental damage to the farmlands owned by the Mongols. Many ethnic Mongols have been killed by the Han[157] for not letting the coal trucks drive through their farms. In 2017, a Han coal lorry driver's killing of a Mongol led to mass protests[158] with students taking to the streets in what was labelled a "War like Situation".

The local ethnic Mongolians have protested strongly against the Han leadership many times regarding inter-marriage and the dilution of the Mongolian script, language and culture. With China adopting a domestic surveillance model, this oppression is no longer regional and is now extending to the mainland. Educated upwardly mobile Mongolian students who speak Mandarin and have attended Han schools are also being targeted

as "you people, Inner Mongolians, Xinjiang people, Tibetans for whom the local police station has regulations".[159]

For Kim Jong-un, these Faultlines are a Godsend and in all this chaos it would not be at all surprising if North Korea's claims on Northeast China were to resurface again.[160] As William Faulkner rightly said, "The past is never dead. It's not even past".

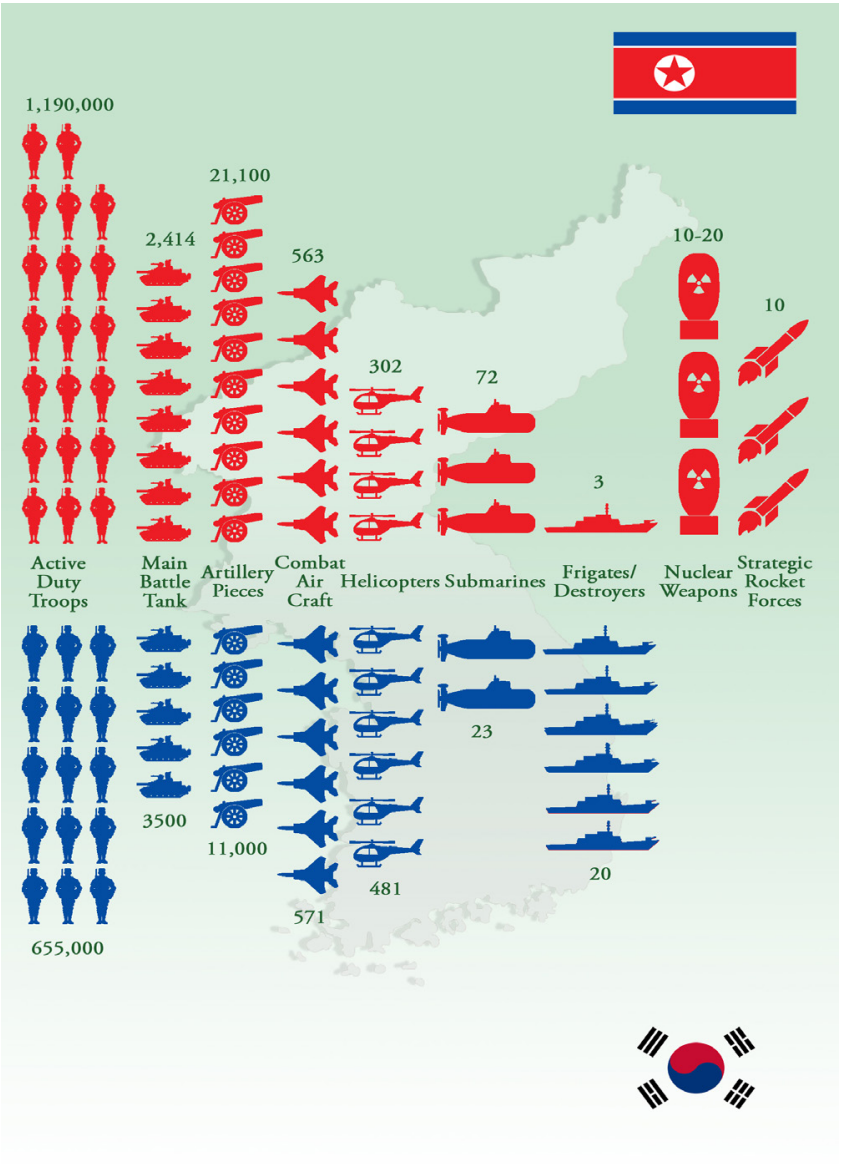
THE CHANGING DYNAMICS

"Change is inevitable for the wheel of time is subordinate to none".

The Changing Dynamics

The Korean crisis reached a boiling point once again in 2017 with North Korea testing Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles towards the Sea of Japan threatening to hit the US territory of Guam in Pacific. These July tests brought a fresh round of UN sanctions vide the UNSC Resolution No. 2371 (55) of 2017 dated August 5, 2017.[161] Though, North Korea subsequently backed down on its Guam threat it again tested a ballistic missile on August 28 which flew over Japan and landed into the Pacific sparking fresh fears of dangerous escalations. South Korean intelligence reported that the activity at the North Korean bases pointed to the likelihood of another nuclear test in the near future and on September 3, North Korea carried out its 6th and most powerful nuclear test till date and more importantly, the first since President Trump assumed office marking a clear challenge to him.

This growing standoff in the Korean Peninsula has added to the quandary of the US allies in the region: South Korea, Japan, and Australia etc. with the US deploying its Pacific fleet on maximum alert and its allies following suit. Japan deployed the Patriot Missile defence system (supplied by US), Australia prepped the US Satellite Communication station at Geraldton and South Korea deployed the THAAD missile defence shields causing flutters in both Pyongyang and Beijing. Adding fuel to the fire was the simulation of war games in South Korea just a



Graphic 1: Military Comparison – North Korea and South Korea[162]

few miles from the DMZ clearly rankling China in a region it considers its natural sphere of influence.

North Korea is well armed to cause catastrophic destruction in Seoul and other parts of South Korea by raining artillery and missiles. While North Korea's troop strength is 1.19 million, South Korea lags behind with 655,000 troops. DPRK also outguns South Korea in terms of artillery and submarines with 21,100 artillery pieces and 72 submarines compared to South Korea's 11,000 artillery pieces and 23 submarines. In combat jet numbers, both the countries are at par with 563 and 571 for DPRK and South Korea respectively but South Korea leads here with more modernized weaponry, jets and missile defence systems procured from or installed by the US unlike North Korea's dilapidated Airforce comprising of Sukhois and MIG's of the Soviet era.

However, any attack on North Korea by the South/US could invite full scale retaliation as DPRK is backed by both Russia and China who have called for restraint while continuing trade. While China's defence spending exceeds $200 billion the PLA has not fought a war since 1979 in Vietnam while the US has been actively involved in various conflict zones globally. Despite this, PLA's troop strength of 21,80,000 compared to Japan's 250,000 or the US Pacific strength of 82,000 backed by a modernized navy and air force is capable of doing some serious damage on the Korean Peninsula. Moreover, it would be a war of huge firepower with nuclear arsenals on both sides which could have grave consequences for the region.

The US with a modern military and large aircraft carriers outfitted with nuclear submarines and bases across Pacific is capable of dominating the region; the only weakness being

Japan's pacifist constitution and South Korea's historical distrust with Japan. In the face of any US aggression, China will not hesitate to arm DPRK's Kim family that it has sustained since the Mao's time. The one thing that China will not accept under any circumstances is the collapse of the Kim regime which could lead to a refugee influx across the Yalu River into its territory and a unified Korea under US leadership/influence and for that it will be prepared to do whatever it takes. While any military scenario gives the upper hand to US and its allies, Russia could be the wildcard that tips the balance in the Far East in favour of North Korea. So far Russia has maintained a balanced stand asking North Korea to back off from its threats against the United States while flying its bombers over DPRK in a show of strength.

China and Russia have always managed to bypass US and UNSC sanctions allowing the North Korean criminal syndicate to operate and sustain the dictatorial regime in Pyongyang.[163] China is important for North Korea as a trading partner accounting for almost 90% of its exports and is most affected by the closure of REM imports. China has been using the livelihood loophole of the UNSC resolutions which allows it to trade minerals under the garb of livelihood to sustain the North Korean people.[164] However, the August 2017 sanctions closed these avenues as well making it difficult for China to trade with North Korea.

To pressurize North Korea further, the US Treasury also imposed sanctions on Chinese individuals, banks, and entities trading with North Korea like Dandong Zhicheng Metallic Materials Co Ltd., JinHou International Holding Co Ltd and Dandong Tianfu Trade Co Ltd that had purchased coal worth $500 million.[165] JinHou and Dandong Tianfu were also sanctioned for trading metals and minerals like steel, anthracite and coal.

The US Treasury also sanctioned China's Bank of Dandong and Dalian Global Unity Shipping Co Ltd and 2 Chinese individuals Sun Wei and Li Hong R associated with the company.[166]

However, the US has conspicuously left out sanctioning China Aerospace & Industry Corporation (CASIC) whose Sanjiang Special Vehicle Corporation has been linked to the missile transporter erector launchers in North Korea's long range missiles such as Hwasong-14. Hence the US has been successful in diplomatically sanctioning DPRK to tighten the screws on trade that impacts China directly and providing an opening to Russia to fill the void.[167]

Russia's trade with North Korea consequently doubled in the first quarter of 2017 with bilateral trade touching $31.83 million. This included coal worth $22 million, lignite worth $4.7 million and Oil estimated at $1.2 million. In return, North Korea exported chemicals and wind instruments worth $420,000 to Russia. Russia plans to increase bilateral trade to $1 billion by 2020. The Russian company Investstroytrest also started a new ferry route connecting the Russian port city of Vladivostok to the North Korean port city of Rajin. Russia has proposed to upgrade the Rajin-Khasan railway linking Russia to the Korean Peninsula. It has also sought to expand a labour immigration program with North Korea and agreed to rebuild North Korea's power grid and develop an ice-free Rason port for Russian coal exports.

There is a nice tug of war going on as the US has both given Russia an opening in North Korea while sanctioning a few of its companies to keep it in check. Gefest-M LLC and its director Ruben Kirakaosyan were sanctioned for trading with North Korea's Tangun Trading Corporation (linked to Second Academy

of Natural Sciences involved in developing in weapons of mass destruction and missiles). Gefest-M also procured many other metals from Tangun. In addition the US Treasury also sanctioned two Singapore based companies and three Russians for providing Oil to North Korea; Transatlantic Partners Pte Ltd and two Russian officials, Mikhail Pisklin and Andrey Serbin that were engaged in the illegal trade of Oil & Gas to North Korea through various entities and banks such as North Korean Bank, Daesong Credit Development Bank etc.

After tasting success in Syria, Russia is trying to reclaim its leverage in the Korean Peninsula which it had ceded to China after the fall of USSR in 1991. Russia is aware that the toppling of the Kim regime could bring US troops on its eastern border where it has been hamstrung for a while due to Chinese invasion. Due to the current sanctions, Russia has been forced to toe the Chinese line in many instances and while the Sino-Russian partnership may be cited as a great partnership, it has many Faultlines that will become evident with time. China's OBOR will undermine the Russian influence in Central Asia, the Caucasus and East Europe. China is also heavily investing in Ukraine to make it its OBOR portal into Europe; a move that it currently justifies to Moscow as stifling western influence but is likely to impact Russia's influence in the country and region in the long term.[168] Russia and the US on the other hand have a history of negotiating and are aware of each other's thought process. This makes it relatively easier for a common understanding which is not the case with China who they both distrust.

The above events are textbook geopolitics but still leave a crucial question unanswered. If North Korea and China are so closely joined at the hip what possessed Kim Jong-un to detonate

a Hydrogen Bomb during President Xi's speech when China hosted the 2017 BRICS summit? Kim Jong-un also stated that it was a long range missile test which further embarrassed President Xi and stole his spotlight![169]

The answer lies in the changing dynamics between North Korea and China post Kim Jong-un's ascension and China's attitude towards him that has also allowed Russia to regain its influence. Though the Sino-DPRK relationship has not been without drama such as 1972 (when the US and China established relations) and 1992 (when China and South Korea established ties); China has always acknowledged DPRK with economic assistance which the Kim Dynasty has repeatedly exploited by pitting China and Russia against each other.

The Kim Dynasty prides itself on unpredictability with allies to keep the aid flowing. For example in 2012, Xiyang Group, a Chinese mining conglomerate invested $40 million towards building a mine and training North Koreans. When its domestic workers were trained to operate the mine themselves DPRK ordered the firm to leave the country and used its state-owned media to mock Chinese economic reforms![170]

While China and DPRK have propagated that they are "as close as lips and teeth", DPRK's xenophobic siege mindset justified through Neo-Confucianism or "Juche" is not in sync with a revisionist China that is embracing mercantilism. In many ways it is a repeat of the isolated Joseon vs. the capitalist and mercantilist Qing Dynasty.

Kim Jong-un assumed office in 2011 and President Xi Jinping in 2012. Under Xi, China has embarked on an ambitious journey to reclaim its global standing where respectability and image are

paramount. This necessitates that Kim Jong-un who President Xi considers a political novice is denied legitimacy and the stature of Supreme Leader. The only reason President Xi tolerates Kim Jong-un is the Chinese emphasis on 'Neighbourhood Stability' to build a strong China.

Kevin Rudd, former Australian Prime Minister has said, "Xi Jinping cannot abide Kim Jong-un, you don't have to travel far in Beijing to hear words of derision about Kim's personality and leadership style. They universally refer to him as Fatty Kim, or, in more polite circles, the Young Gentleman but rarely as the Leader".[171] Max Baucus, a former US ambassador to China in an interview with BBC Radio 4's Today program has stated "The most derogatory expression I've ever heard President Xi Jinping use was his description of Kim Jong-un, he just does not like that man at all".[172]

Though DPRK and China established ties in 1949, Kim and Xi only met in March 2018 after practically having no communication for years.[173] This was a first in the history of the two countries. The meeting though appearing cordial and showcasing Sino-North Korean solidarity was far from it. China upped the ante on North Korea by agreeing to very strict sanctions forcing Kim Jong-un to visit Beijing. Kim Jong-un also spurned President Xi's personal envoy Song Tao during his four day visit to North Korea in 2017 by refusing an audience[174] while President Xi had met with Kim Jong-un's envoy Ri Su-yong in 2016.

After Kim Jong-un succeeded in getting US President Donald Trump's attention for a personal meeting, Xi was forced to agree with the extreme sanctions as leverage over North Korea. While the Chinese propaganda machinery covered the meeting as an

errant Kim Jong-un who had finally come to his sense and was paying homage to his master Xi; the reality is evident for all. China's biggest nightmare is a direct US-DPRK dialogue isolating it and this has not escaped Kim. In the light of the above, Kim's visit to Beijing and acknowledgment of Sino-North Korean ties while isolating President Xi is quite revealing.

For Kim Jong-un, Xi's actions are only a confirmation of a longstanding belief that the Kim Dynasty has held about China from Chairman Mao's time. In April 1975, Kim Il-sung paid a visit to Chairman Mao. The images captured show a warm meeting between friends in what was to become their last conversation with each other. During this period, the communists in Vietnam had given a bloody nose to the Americans and Pol Pot was giving nightmares to the US in Cambodia. In short, it was a great time for Team Red in Asia and Kim Il-sung wanted to capitalize on this and was thus seeking Chinese military assistance for Korean War 2.0 to overthrow the Americans in South Korea and unify the peninsula under the communist banner.

This should have excited China. After all, what could be more important for a communist regime than spreading its ideology? This is what Marx had desired after all. Despite this Mao was uninterested. Why? 1972 witnessed the historic Nixon-Mao meeting brokered by Henry Kissinger where Sino-American Rapprochement was signed.[175] This marked the turning point of the Cold War and set China on the path of economic reforms and industrialization. The rapprochement is directly responsible for making China the powerhouse it is today.

Chairman Mao did not want to take any steps to antagonize relations with the US. Any actions on the Korean Peninsula

threatening US interest's in South Korea would impact the rapprochement and with it China's future growth. The ailing Mao thus downplayed Kim Il-sung's jubilation at the growing communist leverage in Asia stating "I don't want to discuss political matters anymore".[176] Mao stressed on the continuation of dialogue between North and South Korea instead and promised more economic and technological aid to North Korea. He also reaffirmed that China would not establish relations with South Korea in continued support to North Korea.

Chinese documents regarding the meeting only talk of the grand reception, a warm handshake and make no mention of any disagreement. However, a set of documents from the German Democratic Republic (GDR) or East Germany's archives containing telegrams written by diplomats stationed in Pyongyang from 1975-77 confirm the above events and reveal how Kim Il-sung's thoughts towards China changed post the meeting forcing North Korea to create a path independent of China.[177] East China Normal University Professor Shen Zhihua's book "The Last Heavenly Dynasty: China and North Korea in the Age of Mao Zedong and Kim Il-sung," also confirms these events.

For Kim Il-sung the meeting with Mao was a valuable lesson. The 1956 Sino-Soviet collaboration to bring about a failed coup against him along with this betrayal made him understand that despite all the paper commitments and sweet talks; China could not be depended upon when it really mattered and North Korea would do well in playing off Russia and China against each other for its benefit.[178]

This marked the beginning of a North Korean defence policy independent of China that gradually transformed into its nuclear

program. In short, a lot of the blame for DPRK's nuclear program per the Kim Dynasty lies with China though it uses the US Mission in South Korea to justify its actions.

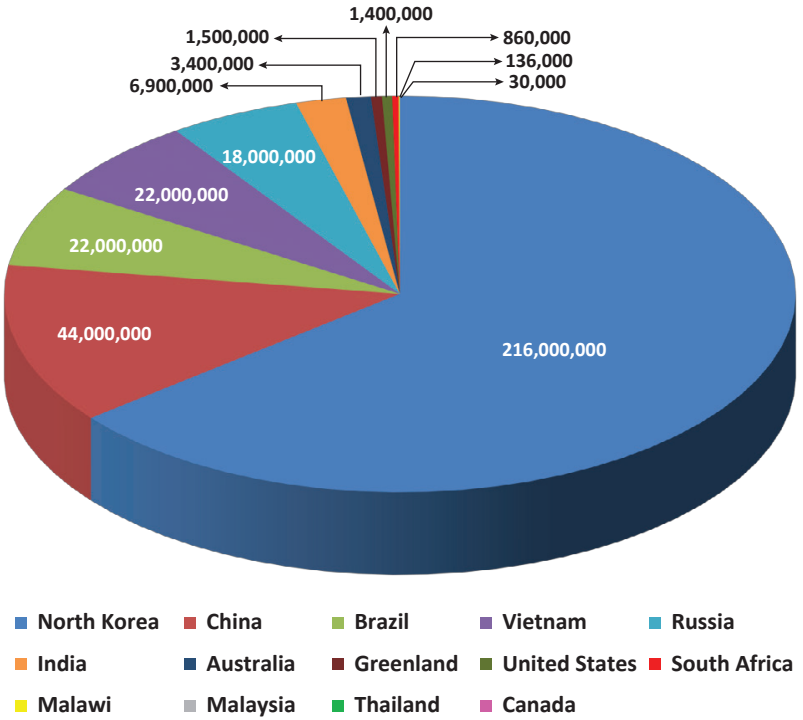
In light of the above, Kim Jong-il's words to South Korean President Kim Dae-jung at the first ever inter-Korean summit in 2000 of "My father, Kim Il Sung, told me time and time again that China has two pockets and that I must always be careful of that. But I think otherwise. China doesn't have two pockets, it has at least 10;"[179] repeated by Hong Seok-hyun, the South Korean ambassador to the US in 2005 and President Moon Jae-in's special envoy to the US in 2017 are hardly surprising.

Kim Jong-un knows his history and appears to be carrying his grandfather's words about China well. After all Beijing has done everything it promised North Korea it would never do showing how hollow its promises are. Kim Jong-un is also hardly likely to forget how China imposed the most stringent sanctions on North Korea at a time when its profile was gaining might globally revealing how much it truly "values its relations with North Korea".

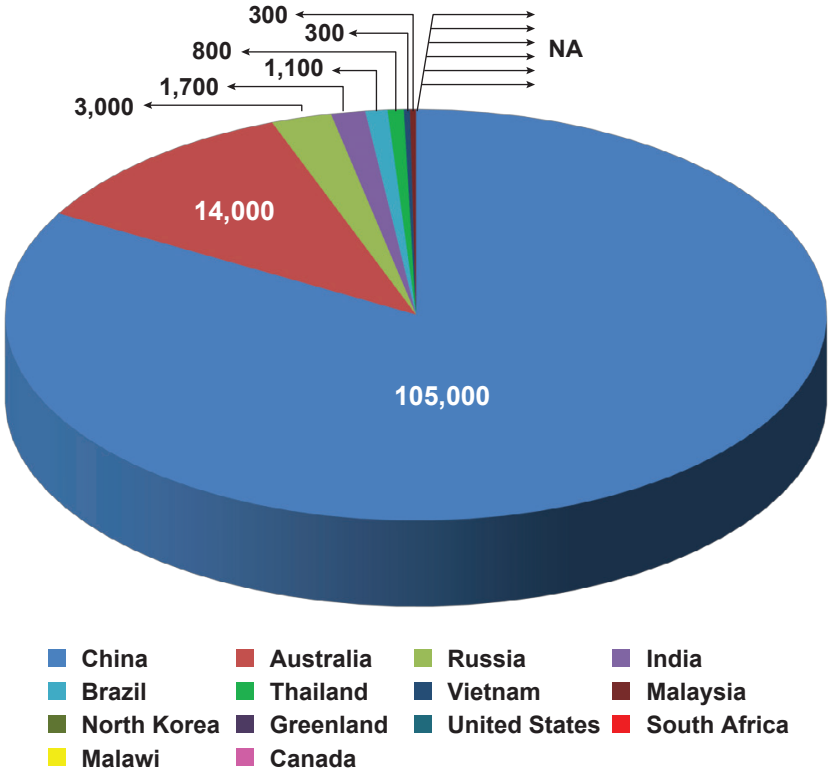
There is also another important reason for Kim Jong-un's brazenness against China and that is the discovery of DPRK's extensive rare earth elements (REE) reserves. REE's are crucial to sophisticated technologies including clean energy, defence and consumer electronics and in the Fourth Industrial Revolution are equivalent to the Oil of the previous century.

China currently controls roughly 90% of the global REE market due to holding vast reserves that it has been able to extensively mine due to its relaxed environmental regulations. This virtual monopoly gives China great leverage in political and trade

disputes in tech industry oriented countries like the US, Japan and South Korea. As stated in Part 2 SRE Minerals, a British PE firm's estimation of DPRK's REE reserves is a staggering 216 million tons which is more than double the current global REE stockpile valued at several trillion US dollars.



Graphic 2: Global REE Reserves (Metric Tons)[180]



Graphic 3: Global REE Production (Metric Tons)[181]

Jim Rogers, a legendary contrarian investor and George Soros's partner in the Quantum Fund is also extremely bullish on DPRK. He started investing heavily a few months into Kim Jong-un's rule and has said he would put all his money in North Korea if he could. He may be citing the views of many American investment bankers and hedge fund managers who feel that DPRK sanctions have given a free run to Chinese and Russian investors at the expense of Americans who are holding onto US curbs on investment like an "old depressing movie" reiterating the

lost opportunities in Myanmar, Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Iran, and Cuba etc.

Rogers compares DPRK under Kim Jong-un to the China of 1981 whose pace of growth will be even faster due to the fact that "the North will merge with the South in a few years". Considering Wall Street's revolving-door relationship with the White House these events are significant for understanding the future of the North Korean economy and radically alter the geopolitics and geo-economics in the Peninsula and the region.

The REM reserves are a gamechanger for DPRK and the reason for sudden interest in the Peninsula from diplomacy to unification talks. Bearing in mind that DPRK's environmental standards would be far more relaxed than those of the developed world, the lure of profits is enough to make any investor drool.[182] From the time of the Joseon Dynasty to the Japanese occupation and subsequent division, it has and always will be about trade.[183]

For the US, South Korea and Japan; it goes beyond mere mining profits. The REM reserves give DPRK a unique opportunity to break the Chinese monopoly which Kim Jong-un is aware of and leveraging to facilitate direct talks with the US. For Russia, its growing influence in DPRK provides a chance to get even with China along with fixing its bleeding economy though this may not stop Russia from teaming up with China to hedge against the UN/US sanctions in the short term. South Korea could also start considering unification seriously as the REM reserves are enough to meet the unification costs that are likely to run into billions. Unification would also empower the Korean Peninsula and force Japan to rethink its national defence strategy.

The US has also succeeded in getting India on board to sanction North Korea. This is important because after China; India has a significant trade relationship with North Korea. India's trade with North Korea is now limited only to food and essential medical supplies.[184] These actions in spirit with the UNSC resolutions could further open up avenues for the world's largest democracy that has been a role model of peace and stability in Asia-Pacific.

It is thus unsurprising that North Korea is pulling out all the stops and turning on the charm offensive to draw South Korea in its camp. It used the 2018 Olympics to propagate its regime effectively while calling for greater reconciliation. South Korea bore the entire cost of the North Korean Olympic delegation at $2.7 million. Lots of high level meetings took place and Kim Jong-un's sister Kim Yo-jong, the head of DPRK's Propaganda Department signed the guestbook at the presidential office as, "I expect Pyongyang and Seoul to get closer in the hearts of our Korean people and the future of unification and prosperity will be advanced."[185] Moon Jae-in and Kim Jong-un further committed to meet soon to end the Korean War and bring peace to the Korean Peninsula.

Kim Jong-un has managed to draw first blood as the diplomatic channels between North and South Korea have strengthened forcing President Trump to agree to unconditional talks with North Korea at President Moon's request to avoid a rift with an ally. This is a first from the US which has always maintained that it would only talk with North Korea after it agreed to disarm.

Kim is aware that he has time and age on his side and DPRK is not too far away from being nuclear ready. For the US, the window of action is getting narrower as its sanctions are not making much

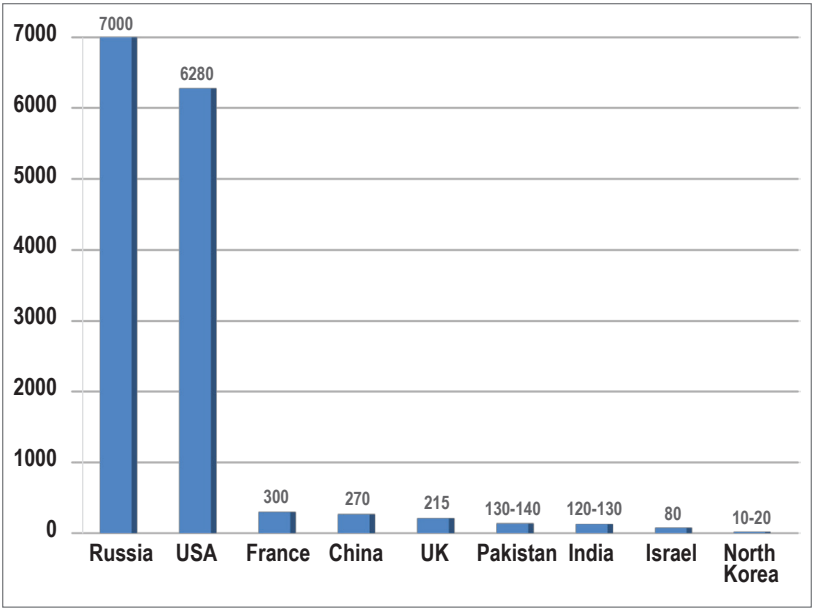
of a difference and any dialogue or diplomatic solution is likely to be time consuming. The US is also buying time while reworking a strategy that has a real chance of succeeding to prevent North Korea from becoming the third country after China and Russia to have the ability to fire a nuclear weapon that can reach its mainland.

Unsurprisingly, the 2018 Nuclear Posture Review released by the Pentagon calls for the development of leaner, meaner nuclear weapons and lowers the threshold for the use of nukes which have been described by many as "a kind of gateway drug for nuclear war". The new NPR in a first ever states that the United States could use nuclear weapons in response to non-nuclear attacks including cyber-attacks in extreme circumstances to defend the vital interests of the United States, its allies and partners. This effectively states that the US would be open to the "first use of nuclear weapons" which is prohibited under international law.[186] The review has also singled out Russia, China and North Korea as potential nuclear threats marking a clear shift from longstanding US policy efforts to reduce and eventually eliminate the existential threat posed by nuclear weapons.

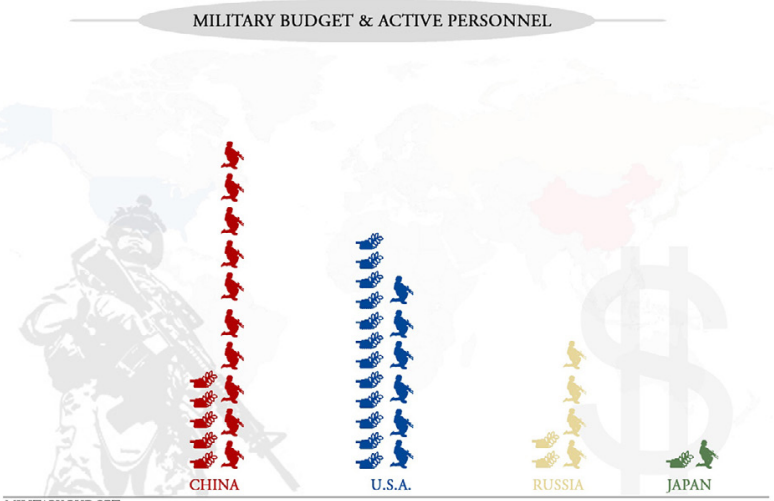
Sigfried Hecker is a former director of Los Alamos National Laboratory and has been to North Korea seven times and seen proof of the development of its nuclear weapons. In an interview with CBS 60 Minutes he has said "I am confident Kim will one day have a nuclear weapon capable of hitting the United States. They're going to get there, that's one thing you can count on. We've tried to sanction them into submission. They've not submitted. They just keep testing and keep evolving. It shows how easy it is to build those centrifuge facilities and hide them under the nose of all those US spy satellites".

Robert Carlin, a former intelligence analyst at the CIA and State Department now a consultant to CBS News has asserted, "four decades of studying North Korea has taught me not to believe everything I see, but it has also taught me that Americans who look down on North Korea as a backward nation are making a big mistake. North Korea understands us better than we understand them. We're still weighed down with a lot of stereotypes and they're going to trip us up. We think if we apply enough pressure, we'll cause them to buckle. And my impression over the years is this is not a country that's going to buckle".[187]

During his campaign President Trump had asked foreign policy advisers a very pointed question about nuclear weapons, "If we had them why can't we use them"?[188] Trump's strategy and the NPR are reminiscent of the Nixon Madman Playbook employed during the Vietnam War. President Nixon was also confronted by communist enemies who thought that leaders of the free world lacked guts and would always behave rationally and in a manner appropriate to their stature. President Trump understands that fire and water cannot be tackled similarly and has thus taken a leaf out of the madman playbook to install fear in the adversary's mind along with a healthy dose of unpredictability. The real fun and games will begin now.

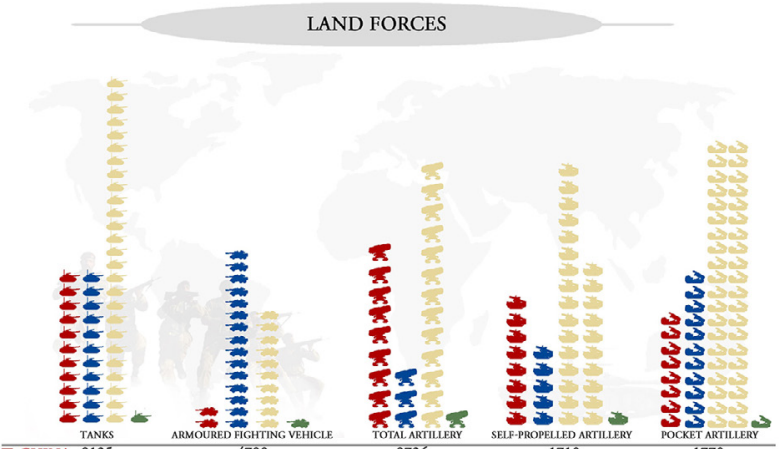


Graphic 4: Global Nuclear Inventory as of August 2017[189]



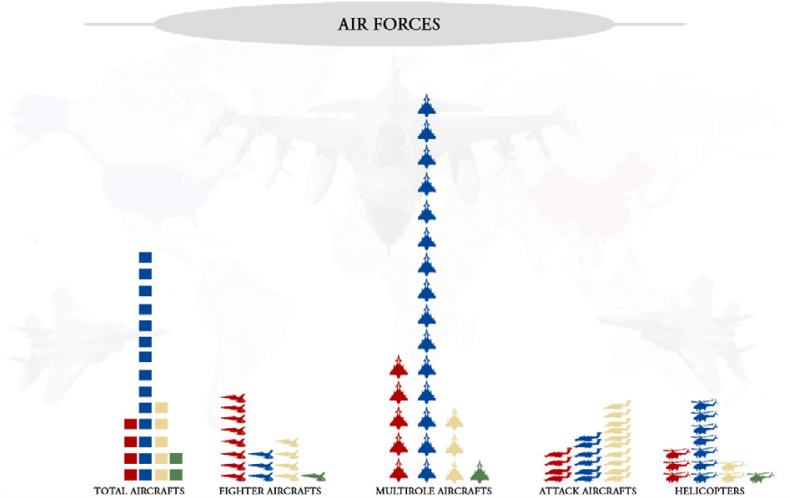
	CHINA	U.S.A.	RUSSIA	JAPAN
MILITARY BUDGET (In billion doller)	215	554.2	69.2	46.1
ACTIVE PERSONNEL (In numbers)	2300000	1301300	71000	247150

Graphic 5: Military Budget and Active Personnel[190]



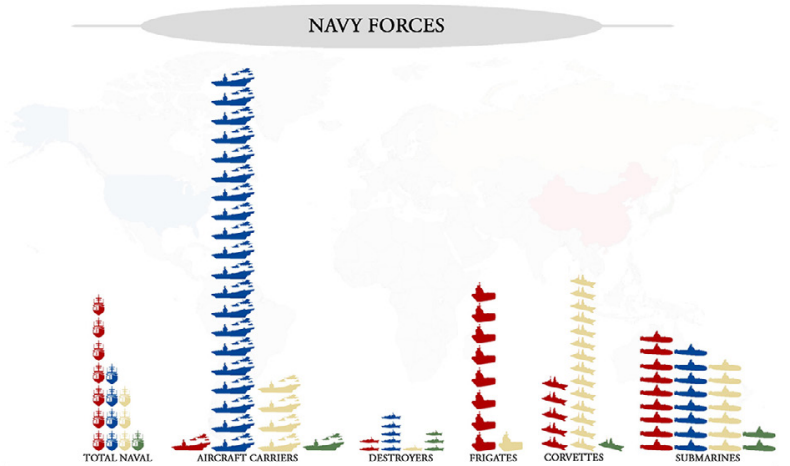
	TANKS	ARMOURED FIGHTING VEHICLE	TOTAL ARTILLERY	SELF-PROPELLED ARTILLERY	POCKET ARTILLERY
CHINA	9125	4788	9726	1710	1770
U.S.A	8848	46000	3269	950	1197
RUSSIA	20050	30201	14533	5943	4020
JAPAN	686	2905	1179	226	99

Graphic 6: Land Capabilities[191]



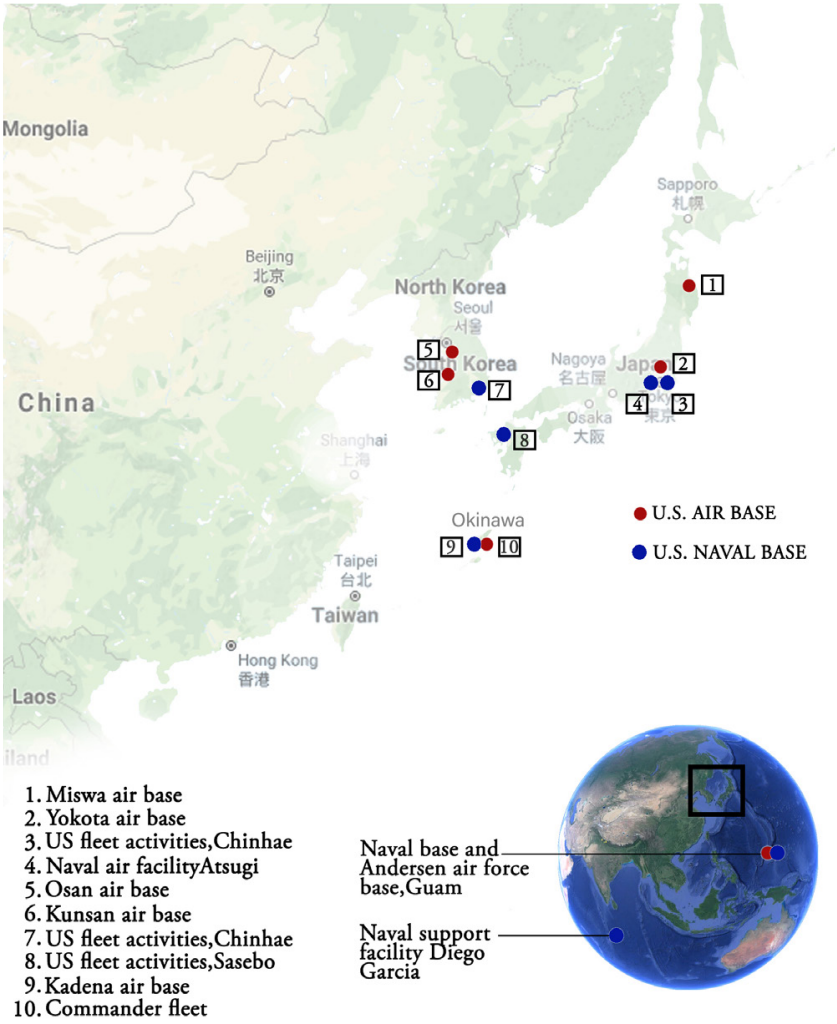
	TOTAL AIRCRAFTS	FIGHTER AIRCRAFTS	MULTIROLE AIRCRAFTS	ATTACK AIRCRAFTS	HELICOPTERS
CHINA	3729	1199	567	300	1627
U.S.A	12100	388	2062	470	5000
RUSSIA	4020	629	428	752	1360
JAPAN	1654	154	134	0	719

Graphic 7: Air Capabilities[192]



	TOTAL NAVAL	AIRCRAFT CARRIERS	DESTROYERS	FRIGATES	CORVETTES	SUBMARINES
CHINA	749	01	32	51	32	73
U.S.A	436	20	85	00	00	70
RUSSIA	313	01	19	06	83	61
JAPAN	129	04	38	00	06	17

Graphic 8: Naval Capabilities[193]



Graphic 9: The US Military Presence in the Region

HYPOTHESIS

"Opportunity comes in many ways and when it knocks on the door you must be ready".

Hypothesis

We have read the events that shaped the Korean Peninsula and seen the geopolitical chess that has been played by various powers from the American betrayal to the Japanese conquest to the Korean War and formation of the criminal syndicate in North Korea backed by the Soviet Union (now Russia) and China. DPRK has repeatedly threatened the US with annihilation and resultantly President Trump has put Kim Jong-un on virtual notice with tightened sanctions after forcing China to come on board. President Trump's strategy seems to be working with the US and DPRK moving closer towards direct conversation, negotiations and hopefully a peace deal. While a successful outcome virtually guarantees President Trump a Nobel Peace Prize, a failure could potentially bring the world towards a nuclear showdown imperilling the security of millions.

Given the geopolitical alignments in Asia-Pacific there is a larger picture to the Korean tangle and its interplay with global conflict that could substantially determine its fate- The prospect of a Trade War and Protectionism. The world is currently witnessing the rise of the extreme right. Reverse globalization, migration bans, xenophobia and nationalist sentiments are raising loud voices against globalization. This populist backlash is further bringing right-wing governments to power globally. Ironically, we are also on the verge of the technology-centric Fourth Industrial Revolution which makes the world a "global village" meaning

that once again there is a chance for the global order to be re-evaluated.

This gives the US a unique opportunity to elevate its profile. It also grants many other countries the chance of becoming a player as technology is a great leveller. It is not surprising that globalization champion George Soros finds fault with the rise of technological giants who have the potential to silent/negate the ideals which he has spent a lifetime funding to foment chaos.

It has been over 7 decades since the last Great War when the new US-led global order established trade as the global peacemaker to both maintain its authority and ensure a peaceful world. While globalization has undoubtedly raised the standard of living of many countries, it has also empowered corporations immensely.

While there is no doubt that Adam Smith's definition of free trade has been usurped by "the power of the interests" with rising income inequalities creating a perception of the failure of free trade; isolationism coupled with growing nationalism is a very dangerous trend for the world forward.

There is a majoritarian belief that strong economic international relationships can help peace and prevent war. While this has generally held true, World War 1 is the Achilles Heel of such theories as despite Europe experiencing unprecedented growth in trade and capital outflows, war still broke out enveloping the entire world. In many aspects, we can argue that the world is now slowly moving towards a similar period before World War 1 that marked the end of "the multi-decade expansion in global ties" that many call the first era of globalization.

China's rise with a quasi state-run model has enabled it to disproportionately reap the benefits of globalization in which the US and EU have been on the losing side. Since inauguration President Trump has flagged the trade surplus with China, South Korea and Germany as hurting the American industry and taking away jobs. He has particularly red-flagged China's trade surplus with the US which hit a record high in 2017 and is taking various steps to bring it down by imposing tariffs. The US has also imposed tariffs on South Korean giants like LG and Samsung. Both Seoul and Beijing have threatened to go to the WTO. The US considers tariffs as an effective tool on China to force North Korea to the negotiating table while keeping Seoul in check.

While the tariffs on China may not immediately create jobs in the US and simply give the same business to another country, China would be placed in the unfortunate position of overcapacity and overproduction forcing it to either close its factories or take a huge reduction in profits directly impacting its hard and soft power building capabilities. Further many countries that will become the target of US tariffs could be also enjoying significant trade relations with China and not agree to the new terms imposed upon them giving China the opportunity to show the fallibility of WTO which has been a tool of the US-led global order to maintain its hegemony.

US hegemony is on the wane, rising powers are creating complex political equations while trading continues to rise. The US withdrawal of TPP is a clear sign of the same. DPRK's abundant REE reserves provide the US with an opportunity to deleverage China's unfair political and economic hold over it which is China's tool to build capabilities for challenging the

current US-led global order in time for its China Dream 2049 mission.

The global changing dynamics have resurfaced old tensions between status quo nations and those that perceive were wronged; challenging the current global order and with it peace. When the global cycle goes through a churn with equations changing quickly even countries with very strong trade relations (similar to Britain and Germany during World War 1) can consider going to war and in the long run this could escalate into a full blown crisis eventually leading to bipolarity.

Trade promotes goodwill while protectionism promotes hostility giving countries an excuse to leverage the rising nationalist feelings to gain support for righting wrongs and avenging history. Thus the prospect of a trade war leading to a military conflict between global powers in Indo-Pacific is more than likely in the long run with the aim to carve out The New Global Order. For the Korean Peninsula, the presence of abundant REE reserves in the Fourth Industrial Revolution means that it is the fulcrum around which all the action will likely take place.

Can economic interdependence in Asia prevail over historical wrongs on the geopolitical chessboard and prevent the next Great War? We are already aware of the significant actors in the peninsula and it is not difficult to imagine which scenarios would be to their advantage. Let us now examine the potential ways in which the scenario in the Korean Peninsula could play out.

Scenario 1: Regime Change in North Korea

Fed up by North Korea's repeated transgressions of international law by Nuclear and Missile testing and hamstrung by the

reluctance of South Korea and Japan to retaliate due to fears of counter strikes, the US could opt for a regime change. This scenario is tricky as getting China's assent could prove tough as it has the most to gain from the Kim regime that offers stability in the North as well as hostility towards the US.

Any change by way of a coup or an assassination with the aid of the internal factions of the North Korean military would result in a denuclearized peninsula amenable to trade diffusing almost a century of conflict. Even if the US were to consider replacing Kim Jong-un with Kim Han-sol or any other Kim family member to maintain internal stability, PLA's influence in the North Korean military would be crucial to cultivate a few generals to build consensus on a possible replacement.

China is well aware for years that Kim possesses nuclear devices but has always placed stability on the Korean Peninsula and its borders over DPRK's nuclear ambitions. China also knows that Kim Jong-un would never use nuclear weapons against it as he may be irrational but he's not suicidal. Russia would also not back a regime change as it needs North Korea to balance its subservient relationship with China.

Thus, for a regime change to succeed the United States would have to offer extensive trade benefits and MTCR membership to China in return and an olive branch to Russia by lifting sanctions along with giving it a pie in DPRK's REM's for the acceptance of a new leader in North Korea.

While this scenario is not altogether unusual for the US and China, as we recently saw in Zimbabwe; for the US this would mean offering too many concessions which may not be acceptable given the tone of the current government. Further, any mismanagement

or error of judgement could have fatal consequences as Kin Jong-un once aware that his regime is in imminent danger of collapse would not hesitate in using nuclear weapons to save his regime converting the US's coup strategy into a zero sum game. Hence, this hypothesis has a low probability of success.

Scenario 2: Immediate War in Korean Peninsula and Unification

This scenario entails an immediate war in the Korean Peninsula which could be triggered by a Thermo Nuclear test in the Pacific waters off the North Korean coast. The test could be carried out by DPRK while pursuing dialogue with the US empowering the trigger happy section in the Trump administration.

North Korea's actions of using the short time window to wriggle a deal by calling out the US military action bluff could rebound and set off a chain of events of rampant destruction. In this scenario, Japan and South Korea's assent would be crucial as they would bear the major brunt of any retaliation by the Kim regime. However, the fear of forced unification by North Korea could bring about an uneasy consensus among the US, South Korea and Japan.

Prior to any military action, the US could move the UNSC in a last ditch effort to build consensus and ban all Oil and Coal shipments including those on humanitarian grounds. Russia and China would be unlikely to endorse this move and could ask North Korea to cease and desist from further tests and call for calm buying it time. DPRK could be egged on to continue its aggression privately by Russia (most likely) or China and could

ramp up the aggression in the Pacific ceasing all diplomatic solutions.

The result would be a US attack with South Korea and Japan on North Korea's defence and military sites backed by The Philippines and Australia providing bases and supplies; creating a circle of defence to prevent the regional conflict from spreading into a global war in the South China Sea. DPRK would be backed by China's PLA and its militias with Russia keeping the critical supply lines open. China would be forced to back the Kim Dynasty as its loss would create political fallout in the peninsula giving the US significant leverage to install a puppet regime in the north along with the presence of US troops on its borders; eliminating the buffer that North Korea currently provides.

The retaliation by North Korea towards Seoul and Japan could start a conventional war on the Korean Peninsula with heavy losses and a massive human toll on both sides. The momentum of the war would lie with the US who would make quick advances towards the North while remaining under pressure from South Korea that would have suffered tremendous damage setting it back by decades.

The heavy losses could also ravage DPRK beyond description forcing it to open back channel talks with the US through Russia offering an immediate ceasefire in return for the US stopping all further advances. Alternately, the US could also leverage its increasing northern advances to open a back channel with North Korea through Russia offering a ceasefire and settlement. In either situation, a cornered and isolated China would have no choice but to agree for a special UNSC meeting to discuss the terms of ceasefire and a final resolution to the North Korean conflict.

The draft resolution at UNSC diplomatically agreed upon by P5 would offer the complete denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula and the creation of a Trusteeship under UN Auspices with Russia and China entrusted in ensuring that North Korea surrenders all its Nuclear Weapons and enriched uranium with South Korea coming under US Trusteeship under the UN mandate.

Unification of Korean Peninsula after an Immediate War

The UN Trusteeship could later evolve into the Unification of Korean Peninsula. The US, Russia and China would engage diplomatically to find a solution to the Korean Peninsula whilst maintaining their spheres of influence in the region. The US plagued by losses, economic drain and growing domestic anti-war protests could agree to a similar conference like Yalta to find a permanent solution along with representatives from Japan, North Korea and South Korea.

Going by past history Russia could be given Trusteeship of North Korea while America could continue its Trusteeship of the South. Given DPRK's wish to not be dominated by China, this scenario is more likely to be agreeable by it. The biggest loser here would be China who would not accept such an arrangement as permanent fearing growing US influence at its borders as well as Russian dominance in the Far East. It would instead seek the formation of a Federal Republic of Korea with autonomous regions of North and South under UN mandated elections and governing systems. China could also follow its Hong Kong model and prop up political parties particularly in North Korea. Russia, fearful of the Chinese crippling of its Trusteeship in the North

could agree to such a proposal along with the US, Japan and South Korea.

The Kim Dynasty would be slowly eased out during the period of Trusteeship and in return Russia could demand an easing of sanctions and the recognition of its Crimean claims by the US along with the agreements of Autonomous regions of Eastern Ukraine with limited powers to Kiev allaying the Russian fears of a resurgent NATO and finalize the Russian sphere of influence from Eastern Europe to the Far East. China could also work out a solution to repatriate North Korean refugees to reopen its trade links with North Korea and access its REM's.

Thus, 3 powerful nations could agree to a final solution for the peninsula retaining their spheres of influence. South Korea and Japan would both welcome the move to rebuild the denuclearized united peninsula as would the UK and EU calling it a win for democracy. Another significant gainer here would be the Catholic Church hailing this milestone as a victory for global peace and stability as soul harvesting in the war ravaged and mineral rich peninsula would now become possible.

After over a century, the Korean Peninsula would be reunited under very different circumstances with power sharing agreements between the key leaders in the north and south ensuring its opening up to the global community.

This hypothesis also has a low probability as for this war must break out on the peninsula in the short term. Within a couple of years, the US will hold elections and the prospect of strong action during the election year is risky due to the uncertainty of an outcome. Also, the window for such actions will become narrower as North Korea moves closer to its target of being

nuclear ready which is not too far away. An immediate conflict also appears unlikely as the US military is already stretched across different theatres from Syria/Iraq, Somalia, and Nigeria to its longest running war till date in Afghanistan which has consumed billions of dollars. The American civil society is also averse to opening more theatres of war given the human and economic toll they bring to the American economy.

Scenario 3: Diplomatic Solution to Korean Crisis – Option 1

Moving away from military solutions, there are also the possibilities of a diplomatic approach. This could play out in 2 ways. Let us explore Option 1 first.

The US while keeping all options on the table against North Korea from military to economic; could be implored by China, Russia and South Korea to consider a diplomatic solution. South Korea's fear of counter retaliation by DPRK and its trade surplus with China in the wake of American protectionism could compel the US to alter its diplomatic strategy with DPRK. From the time that DPRK adopted Byungjin; the US has used sanctions as a tool to force it to choose between its nuclear ambitions and economic development but failed. Aware of South Korea's Liberal Government's soft corner towards DPRK coupled with the success of Kim Jong-un's nuclear goals, the US could agree to a less hardline stance.

Russia in trying to reclaim its space in the Korean Peninsula could diffuse the crisis by clearly stating that a permanent diplomatic solution must take into place North Korea's legitimate security concerns. Simultaneously, China could comply with

extreme UN sanctions against DPRK to prevent the acceleration of the trade war with the US to buy time for capacity building. This scenario is in line with what we are currently witnessing as the US has opened back channel talks with North Korea through South Korea to bring Kim Jong-un to negotiate the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula.

The question of utmost importance here is- What does denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula mean? The correct answer to this holds the key to the success of any diplomatic solution. For DPRK denuclearization is applicable to the entire Korean Peninsula which includes the dismantlement of nuclear weapons in South Korea and its vicinity to negate the threat of the US forces against the Kim regime. DPRK thus justifies the presence of its nuclear weapons by stating that the US acts of imperialism have forced it to go nuclear and accordingly, the US must first remedy its actions by eliminating the source of the nuclear threats before talking about the abandonment of its nuclear weapons. In a broad but unlikely sense, this could also apply to all forward bases of US troops in Asia-Pacific and impact its "extended deterrence strategy".

The US is unlikely to accept any of these terms as this would play right into China's hands and mean the end of its dominance in Asia-Pacific. South Korea and Japan are also unlikely to accept such terms as North Korea has already achieved its nuclear threshold and its history of not honouring commitments makes them vulnerable in the absence of US troops/THAAD. The absence of US troops and necessary deterrence would make it easy for DPRK to achieve its ultimate goal of unifying the peninsula under it. If North Korea and the US agree for a phased retrieval

the optics of who would go first and when are equally important for successful denuclearization.

Hence, after several rounds of negotiations with North Korea, the US could finally agree to a diplomatic solution of the denuclearization of DPRK by removing THAAD missile batteries and aggressive military assets on the peninsula in return; limiting its troop presence to the minimum deterrence required in protecting its strategic assets and allies. Russia, China, US, North Korea, Japan and South Korea could collectively negotiate the terms of agreement much like the Iran Nuclear Deal that is also backed by United Nations. Similar to Iran, The North Korean Nuclear Deal could ensure North Korea agrees to give up its Nuclear Weapons programme in return for American guarantees of regime safety demilitarizing the Korean Peninsula to a minimum deterrence level while allowing it to maintain a nuclear program for civilian purposes. North Korea would agree to cease and desist from carrying out further ICBM and ICRM tests along with halting all R&D of the same in the future. It would also agree to dismantle its chemical and biological warfare program along with any other weapons of mass destruction. Herein, North Korea would effectively surrender to the US demand of "a permanent, verifiable and irreversible denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula".

North Korea could also agree to re-join NPT and MTCR and agree to non-proliferation of missile technology to any country or acquiring weapons grade plutonium capable of developing a nuclear weapon. It would also agree to allow IAEA inspectors and regularly certify its compliance which would be periodically reported to UNSC. In return, the UN, US and EU would begin lifting sanctions imposed over the past few decades subject to North Korea not violating any terms.

DPRK would insist on maintaining its nuclear program for peaceful purposes for 2 reasons. Firstly, it would be able to quickly convert its program to military use in case of the US not honouring/ delaying its commitments and secondly, ensure the continued money inflow from its nuclear energy exports to China.

The North Korean Nuclear Deal would be welcomed by the international community barring the Washington hawks who would call it a ticking time bomb. Russia and China would also welcome the deal as would Japan and South Korea while calling for strict compliance and verification of the terms of the deal. China would benefit the most as Kim Jong-un would lose a lot of bargaining power with it giving China a safer and more stable neighbourhood. For the US, the deal would create an environment to build economic ties to ensure its share of North Korea's REE reserves as part of the diplomatic outreach. The US could also tout this deal as a better one than the 2016 Iran Nuclear Deal as it would have achieved what all previous administrations could not- The Denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula and the elimination of nuclear threat to the United States.

The timeline of such a deal could be within the next half decade. While the Iran Nuclear Deal gives us reason to believe this could become a reality, there is one critical factor that gives this hypothesis a low probability. When Iran signed the deal, it was reeling in sanctions like DPRK but still in the stage of enriching uranium while North Korea is just a short time away from becoming nuclear ready.

Historically, no country has ever given up its nuclear arsenal once it is ready. Unlike Libya or Iran's dismantled uranium enrichment programs, North Korea's scenario is closer to

Kazakhstan, Belarus, and Ukraine who had ready nuclear weapons on their soil after the USSR collapsed. While these countries did not have the codes, ability or confidence to use them; North Korea is very different, its regime has consolidated its rule on self-defence and protection against the United States and has the backing of China and Russia.

This is why it is impossible to imagine that Kim Jong-un would simply agree to Washington's demand to completely surrender his nuclear weapons and trade away the only thing that ensures the US would not invade. North Korean security ideology is inconceivable without nuclear weapons against the outside world. Internally, its weapons industry has ensured the loyalty of the elites to Kim Jong-un and any serious denuclearization could rattle many; creating internal enemies against a yet untested Kim Jong-un. The survival of the Kim Dynasty is currently dependent on Kim Jong-un and he is unlikely to agree to anything that threatens it after years of consolidation, more so when he is in the strongest position of his career. Hence, it is unlikely that Kim Jong-un would accept such a deal and in the event of acceptance, adhere to it.

Scenario 4: Diplomatic Solution to Korean Crisis – Option 2

Following on the same assumptions and environment as Scenario 3, this hypothesis dwells on a radically different US strategy keeping in mind the global changing dynamics and emerging US-China bipolarity.

Fully aware that China needs a peaceful border on its northeast to continue its capacity building; and plagued by slowing growth,

the abuse of Uighurs in the northwest gaining prominence and the need to prevent a conflict with the US in the short term; the US could open back channel negotiations directly with North Korea leading to an agreement.

The US could leverage Kim Jong-un's Northeast China ambitions to gain an opening; preventing China from dominating DPRK's abundant REE reserves. As China grows in stature it would be uncomfortable with nuclear-armed neighbours that it can't control while Kim Jong-un's learning's from his father would never allow him to trust or become subservient to China providing a unique opportunity for the US to exploit.

The US could agree to sign a Peace Treaty with North Korea and agree to curtail military exercises with South Korea while maintaining minimum deterrence to protect its allies initially but extensive back channel talks could force the US establishment to accept the reality of a Nuclear North Korea that is unlikely to roll back its nuclear program/minimum nuclear deterrence needed for the sustenance and survival of the regime.

Apprised with the reality that economic sanctions have failed while Russian and Chinese circumventions have granted them a head start in the Fourth Industrial Revolution, the US military and foreign policy establishment could reconcile themselves to the fact that the North Korean strategy must be changed from offence to diplomacy and deterrence similar to the USSR during the Cold War. Understanding that Kim Jong-un is irrational and not suicidal, the American foreign policy establishment and prominent thinktanks could draw up a new policy outlook towards the Korean Peninsula and the nuclear proliferation

question which could become the crux of a new administrative policy in light of past failures.

The idea of a Nuclear North Korea at China's borders that does not accept its dominance would create a "New American Foreign Policy" for the East Asian region aimed at:

1. Containing or freezing the North Korean nuclear arsenal to limited numbers needed for deterrence along with its commitment to a no first use policy. Further North Korea would also commit to not build more advanced nuclear weapons, sign NPT, cease further nuclear and ICBM testing, strictly adhere to nuclear non-proliferation avoiding any direct or indirect trade of nuclear material or technology and only use nuclear technology further only for civilian purpose and not engage in enriching uranium or weapons grade plutonium. North Korea would also agree to halt all further R&D of nuclear weapons and ICBM technology. Further North Korea would also agree to grant periodical access to IAEA inspectors while signing the Additional Protocol of IAEA. China would act as the guarantor of North Korea to ensure a peaceful neighbourhood for its own interests.
2. North Korea agrees to restrict itself to small and medium term range for deterrence purposes only. The question of IRBM's could also arise here which North Korea would insist on retaining.
3. North Korea also agrees to dismantle its chemical and biological warfare program along with all other WMD's.
4. Establishment of a conflict resolution mechanism like a coordination group with China and the Koreans including Hotlines to avoid any miscalculation.

5. The US would put up ballistic missile defence systems and provide advance weapons and jets to South Korea and Japan
6. The US would also affirm nuclear umbrella protection to its i.e South Korea and Japan to avoid an arms race in region.
7. The US would support the change in the Japanese Constitution from pacifist to conventional with minimum military deterrence in sync with US Military Industrial Complex keeping it short of a nuclear weapon as expected fallout of the legitimization of a Nuclear North Korea.

On the basis of the above, a comprehensive deal could be signed recognizing North Korea's rights to acquire Nuclear Weapons for basic minimum deterrence further to which the US would be obliged to remove sanctions per the timelines set out in the deal contingent to verifying compliance reports by IAEA to UNSC that would cease to exist on any violations and resulting in extremely severe consequences by the US.

Post the signing of the deal, talks of unification which would have already begun will gain momentum. A period of confidence building measures such as shutting down the propaganda machinery, uniting separated families, allowing greater movement across the DMZ, tourism and cultural initiatives, connected railway lines, an FTA, opening up of the economic zones, enhanced economic cooperation and military engagements; and increased bilateral visits could be undertaken by both sides to create an environment of normalization.

The greater people-to-people connect strategy is straight out of South Korea's democratic Unification Ministry model and could take the better part of a decade as it would take time for citizens from both countries to gain confidence and become

harmonious with each other. South Korea could also propose a referendum with North Korea's consent at a later date with the aim of converting it into a real election in the future in a model of one country, two systems.

While North Korea would never agree to any kind of democratic unification model under the south as it would threaten the Kim regime, it would continue participating in the confidence building measures to buy time whilst building capabilities and planning unification at an opportune time later. North Korea would always pursue unification under its banner which it knows could never happen through a democratic process which would put its regime at risk. Further, for the millions of South Korean citizens who enjoy freedom and an open society any thought of unification under the north would be simply unthinkable.

China, despite living with a nuclear North Korea on its border for years could demand a sweetener to act as guarantor. It could receive status quo on trade for greater access to its markets for American corporations especially in regards to REE's and REM's. The US could announce this deal as a big economic victory over China along with the elimination of North Korea's nuclear threat on its territory.

Consequently, Japan's shedding of its pacifist constitution would force China to expend more resources for its defence to retain its Asian leader tag suiting the stretched American military establishment well while the US Military Industrial Complex would gain from more lucrative deals with Japan, South Korea and other allies in Asia-Pacific.

The US would take advantage of the fact that the Chinese growth engine has a limited period of capacity building before

the law of diminishing returns kicks in; in addition to China's growing debt, credit bubble, ageing population and forced increase in social security spending. America would also reach an understanding with North Korea for greater access to its REM reserves for its corporates creating a level playing field and reducing China's hegemony that could threaten its technological prowess during a conflict. In summary, this would be a win for both US corporates and the MIC.

Of course such a deal would come at a heavy price as America would have to tackle its allies who could accuse it of bartering their country to save US cities and would expect heavy concessions and significant defence protection in return. This deal would also clearly announce bipolarity in the global order as the US in a first, would accede to China's aid and advice to sort out the geopolitical turmoil in the Korean Peninsula.

Post the deal, North Korea would open itself for trade and embark on economic upliftment while minimizing access to western influence for his citizens citing adherence to Neo-Confucianism. History has shown us that communists consider a deal no better than a piece of paper and have no respect for it thus violating a deal comes to them naturally and this case would also be no different.

It is quite possible that sometime post a decade and a half of consistent growth and regime security, North Korea would start expanding its nuclear weapons program to fulfil its longstanding unification goal under the Neo-Confucianism ideology taking the Korean Peninsula back to where it all began.

Option 2 of the Diplomatic Solution to the Korean Crisis is most likely to be implemented in the short to medium term. This

hypothesis has a high probability. After consolidating his hold on North Korea, eliminating dissenters and possible challengers and exhibiting nuclear capability; Kim Jong-un has bid his time. North Korea has never differentiated between nuclear energy for peaceful purposes and military use; and it is inconceivable that Kim Jong-un could agree to any other deal that would de-hyphenate the two.

Kim Jong-un is well placed to exploit President Trump's need to strike a deal. President Trump's belief of Japan and South Korea as 'ungrateful free riders' along with America's need for REM's serves the purpose of unification on his terms. It also secures the Kim Dynasty's rule, nuclear deterrence, achieves capital inflows and Byungjin along with elevating DPRK's international profile as a nuclear state.

For the US this deal will be the acceptance of the inevitable. There was a time to tackle the North Korean menace but it has long passed. After the fall of the USSR when China was yet to emerge as a threat there was a great window of opportunity to denuclearize and unify the peninsula. However, the US was then busy invading regimes in the Middle East partial to the Soviets. It is also hard to fathom how North Korea made significant nuclear progress with US intelligence agencies remaining oblivious. The US was also aware that China and Russia were helping DPRK circumvent sanctions but chose to adopt an ostrich syndrome and now when much water has flown under the bridge; it would be foolhardy of it to assume that North Korea would simply rollover.

CONCLUSION

"Can societal progress ever justify the loss of a civilisation"?

Conclusion

Like all other geopolitical games, the chaos in the Korean Peninsula revolves around trade. The Peninsula lies strategically bordering China in proximity to Japan and Russia and serves as an important balancer in Asia-Pacific. Years ago its location, gateway and lucrative trade opportunity made the United States of America sign a Friendship Treaty with it and today its rich REM's will bring about the normalization/unification of the Peninsula again.

The Korean Peninsula under the Joseon Dynasty shared a deep aversion to western influences and considered them evil. This was not solely due to the adoption of Neo-Confucianism it shared with Ming China but also the perils of evangelization. Today China is very different; it is a communist state with a totalitarian system under one party rule. The constitution of its Communist Party reigns supreme now. China has also done its utmost to minimize the influence of Confucianism and shunned religion completely weaning away all ideologies that do not conform to its communist values.

South Korea though a very advanced society and a technological powerhouse today is deeply under the influence of the Catholic and Protestant Church and tops the world in evangelical activities. North Korea shares China's communist values along with a cult like following of its Supreme Leader under Juche, a manipulated version of Neo-Confucianism.

The south and north are in stark contrast with each other. While the south has grown leaps and bounds in terms of education and standard of living; the north lives in abject poverty and famine making it ripe for soul harvesting. The Koreas of today are light years away from the cultural powerhouse under Goguryeo/ Goryeo/ Joseon rule which held true to its traditional values and have paid a huge cultural and civilizational price that is perhaps irreversible.

A unified Korean Peninsula would be an Asian powerhouse exercising significant influence over the South and East China Sea, a region through which a majority of the world's maritime trade route passes. Its coastline could be used to set up SEZ's and ports undermining China's sole desire to dominate Asia. It would serve as the fulcrum for the balance of power in Asia and help in building a coalition of countries against China on the lines of an East Asia NATO. The military ties could also be converted into beneficial trade and political alliances. It is noteworthy that while Asia holds the maximum nuclear powered countries there are none in East Asia and this issue could also be addressed with unification.

A united Korean Peninsula would undoubtedly be created on the premise of democracy and socialist ideals. It would be an open economy bringing development and a raised standard of living for millions of Koreans. Imagine the collapse of the Berlin Wall when Communist East Germany and Capitalist West Germany became one again! Germany is now an economic powerhouse and leads the EU along with France. A unified Korean Peninsula has so much potential but this process will not be easy with significant challenges.

The most important question here is - Why would the current global powerhouses agree?

Let's start with the elephant in the room: China. China has undoubtedly the most to lose from eliminating a buffer state between its borders and South Korea consequently surrounding itself by Russian, American and Japanese forces on all sides. It would also lose a prized quasi communist state to democracy which could create internal jitters and set off separatist movements and embolden the ones already in motion such as Taiwan, Hong Kong, Xinjiang, etc. Thus, China has and will do its best to prevent and delay unification by acting as a mediator between North Korea and the United States.

However, times are changing. The United States under President Trump is again becoming assertive to reclaim its global role. President Trump does not relate to President Obama's globalist leanings and open border policies and this ensures an interesting showdown. Under President Xi, China is also trying to establish itself as a superpower of equal stature by challenging the established global institutions. A fair part of China's rise can be attributed to nefarious means via its quasi states and proxies in crime like Pakistan, Iran, and North Korea etc. Under a powerful US President these become easy prey to target China; the result of which we will see in the impending trade war while China bids time to build capabilities.

In the Hypothesis, we have discussed the different scenarios that could emerge to bring about unification/normalization. In chess, a pawn no matter how important is always sacrificed to save the queen and it is no different here. The seriousness and threat of the sanctions and trade war respectively with Russia playing

the joker in the deck will force China to come to the negotiating table or face an imminent refugee crisis from North Korea.

China has a lot of geographic vulnerabilities that could be exploited and only need the right tactics and strategy. The United States could also up the ante in Afghanistan, further chaos in Central Asia, better relations with Vietnam and Myanmar to corner China even more. The Korean Peninsula could be the Catholic Church's first Asian state with a gateway to atheist China.

Going beyond the above, other important issues such as the merging of cultures, ideals of democracy and equality also need to be addressed. Korea under the Joseon, its last dynasty adopted Neo-Confucianism values. North Korea currently follows an extreme distortion of Neo-Confucianism while South Korea is now more Christian than Buddhist or a Confucianism adherent. An important question that emerges in the merging of two extreme ideologies- What will now count as Korean culture? What will be the values of this new unified state and how will their cultures merge? Will they be Chinese, Japanese, Russian, American, Catholic, Protestant, Capitalist, Communist, Neo-Confucian or Buddhist?

Culture is more than just tradition and rituals. It is the glue that binds and builds society. A tightly knit society leads to a strong united nationalist country. What will nationalism mean in the Korean Peninsula now? What will be the founding pillars of its foreign policy? Who will it consider its natural allies? What will be its soft power strategy?

Hence, while it may be relatively easier to achieve a unified political entity through various methods; inculcating true nationalist values in the citizens will present a formidable challenge

as the countries responsible for unification: US, Japan, Russia and China will obtain a virtually blank slate to write, influence and shape the Peninsula's future in sync with their combined and individual interests but will those represent the Korean Peninsula's interests?

History is the witness that after any major national crisis the third generation of a country often becomes completely indifferent and even insolent towards it. How many Americans today remember the Great Depression and Civil War and adopt saving patterns? How many Russians remember the brutality under Stalin? How many Indians remember the ill-treatment and oppression under British occupation? It is not always their fault. Public memory is short lived and unless a country's education system prioritizes the past, memories get diluted and history gets relegated to libraries, archives and museums that are rarely opened and visited.

Going by the current "Collective is Good" argument espoused by academics globally, one could argue and state that this may be a good thing. If we don't forget, we cannot put the past behind us and progress. Moreover, wouldn't the coming together of two contrasting ideologies: communism and capitalism into democracy and socialism for the greater good serve as a beacon for the world to emulate?

Such a state would surely adopt the best of both ideologies: healthcare, housing, medical and educational facilities for all along with a free market, democracy, development and poverty alleviation. This argument is foolish and smacks of utopia. Development and progress are great, poverty alleviation even

greater but the question to really ask is – Are they greater than civilization and culture?

Is a homogenous society truly better than an individualist society? Our culture is what defines us: it is our heritage, pride and joy. The wise ancients rightly said if you want to know where a man is going, you must know where he is coming from. Beyond history, our culture is our legacy and when you kill a culture, you kill a civilization. This has been true since time immemorial in the dirty game of geopolitics: subjugation of culture by collectivism citing the greater good and development just for profit and resources.

Man is a social animal and in the Fourth Industrial Revolution; this translates to the world becoming a global village. Hence, isolationism is not an option should it even be a choice. In an interconnected world trade is a great tool to break social barriers and evolve. Trade forces us to become more civilized and gives us respect for work. It enriches society and introduces the positives of other cultures and civilizations into our own so we can progress further.

Trade promotes goodwill, creates an exchange of ideas and empowers our vision. Open borders synonymous with free trade and not the abolition of nation-states have the potential to lift millions out of poverty as workers can freely migrate to obtain the best value for their services. A world of free movement would be $78 trillion richer. One can only imagine its collective positive impact on the planet.

Frederic Passy, a noted French economist and Nobel Peace Prize winner has stated, “Someday all barriers will fall someday mankind, constantly united by continuous transactions, will form

just one workshop, one market, and one family and this is the grandeur, the truth, the nobility, I might almost say the holiness of the free-trade doctrine; by the prosaic but effective pressure of interest it tends to make justice and harmony prevails in the world".

When free trade takes on the model of mercantilism and moves away from fair trade, it seeks to impose its values on others for control with thirty pieces of silver. This has been true of colonization, imperialism and recently the unfair Chinese trade practices. Mercantilist policies destroy the fundamentals of free trade and a proud civilization and only sow seeds of resentment.

In moving away from free trade we begin the journey towards communism which has never benefitted anyone in the past or present; and only consolidated power in the hands of a few, led to abject poverty, the plunder of resources and the death of millions. Communism and consequently, Collectivism has broken the family structure and with it societies and civilizations. In the never-ending thirst for global power and the Cartelization of Natural Resources; the Korean Peninsula has become a pawn on the geopolitical chessboard and lost its civilization which cannot be regained at any price. And that is the real tragedy.

धर्म एव हतो हन्ति धर्मो रक्षति रक्षितः ।
तस्माद्धर्मो न हन्तव्यो मानो धर्मो हतोऽवधीत् ॥

Dharma destroys those who destroy it,
Dharma protects those who protect it.
Dharma does not destroy and cannot be destroyed.

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The New Global Order

"The book is one that should be read by our young looking for a factual narrative and an Indian perspective that has emerged from three young Indians who had the courage and the dedication to put their thoughts down".

Vikram Sood – Former Chief of Research and Analysis Wing (R&AW)

The New Global Order is an endeavour to provide a multidisciplinary angle on the world we live in, to find solutions for a peaceful way forward. History is the witness that every time new borders are drawn, the seeds of future conflict are sown. The book maps the shifts in power over history across the Ottoman Empire, the Russian Empire, France & Germany from the 12th century through World Wars 1 & 2 to the present. It also discusses the way the power shifted from the UK to the US post-World War 2 that led to the Cold War, the fall of USSR, the rise of China as well as India's rise as a counter to China in the times to come. The book is divided into 6 parts. Part I, set in the Middle East discusses how the seeds of modern day chaos were sown. Part II, dedicated to the War on Terror discusses American imperialism. Part III, Eurasia discusses the dichotomy of Europe, which has the potential to rule the world but has been unable to shed its east vs. west divide. Part IV focuses on the emerging giant China. Part V-India discusses the Indian foreign policy & its evolution & concludes by drawing up the road ahead for it to become an Asian powerhouse. In Part VI, the book discusses the current global order & the contrasts between the Beijing & the Washington Consensus, BRICS & the tools important for the transformation of The New Global Order. They are Narco-Terror, Petrodollar, Climategate, Water Wars, Virtual Water, Surveillance State, Military-Industrial Complex & most importantly, Communism. Communism will gradually erase the sovereign boundaries & lead to The Global Corporate State via the mega trade deals of TPP/TTIP & TISA. The book also talks about the trends that will serve as the flashpoints of this transition & concludes by taking the reader through the 3 founding pillars of the Global Geopolitical Order, the Global Geoeconomic Order & the Cartelization of Resources.